NOT MY PEOPLE'S WAR *by RICHARD WRIGHT*

NEW MASSES

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BRITAIN AFTER TWENTY MONTHS

A survey from London by R. Palme Dutt

HOW OPM CREATES SHORTAGES

By Adam Lapin

CANADA'S DORISE NIELSEN

By Herbert Biberman

FDR BAYONETS LABOR

An Editorial

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Between Ourselves

WE SAID last week, talking about the Artists and Writers Congress, "We hope to see you"—and we did. Not all of you, certainly, not by a long way, but as many as we could hope to in the course of a single convention during one weekend. The fact is, we can't remember finding as many friends of NM together since our anniversary meeting in February. And many who couldn't come to that because of the distance turned up as delegates to the congress—from the Far West, the South, the Midwest, and closer home. Besides the professional writers and artists the congress drew a healthy attendance of trade unionists, bookstore dealers, and others for whom the proceedings had special value.

There was a particularly nice atmosphere of kinship—you could sense it during the discussions and in the informal talk between sessions. And there was laughter too, the kind of humor that rises spontaneously when many friends come together, as well as color and excitement. Some things we particularly remember: the standing ovation given Samuel Sillen's address on "The Function of the Intellectual Today"; the deep hush of sadness and pride when the audience stood in reverence as Alvah Bessie called the roll of writers and artists who had died fighting in Spain (Alvah's talk on the writer and the Spanish war also got a big response); Dorothy Brewster's lucid, witty "Interpretation of Social Change in Literature"; Michael Gold's provocative "Evaluation of Proletarian Literature in the Thirties"; Herbert Aptheker's analysis of the Negro's contribution to American culture; John Howard Lawson speaking on American democracy. . . . But we haven't room to do more than give an idea of what the congress was like. We do plan, however, to publish in future issues several papers that were read at the various panel discussions. Meanwhile, for a glimpse of the congress' Friday night anti-war meeting, you can read Richard Wright's magnificent address printed in this issue, on page eight.

Other articles, besides the congress papers, which are now in type and will appear shortly, include a piece on the National Maritime Union by Ernest Moorer, who wrote the amazing story of Local 65 which appeared in last week's NM; a story by Blaine Owen on Ralph Gray, pioneer builder of the Share Croppers Union, who was shot to death ten years ago by Alabama's labor-haters. We will also publish soon a long review of R. Palme Dutt's *India Today,* a book that has been published in England but not in this country. The review is by Bradley Rogers.

Not long before R. Palme Dutt's article in this issue reached us we received from the author a long-delayed letter on our Thirtieth Anniversary Issue. Mr. Dutt had been sent a special copy of that issue but his regular copy arrived some time before, and we are proud to publish his comment: "I was very glad to have your letter of March 4 and to hear of the special copy of your Thirtieth Anniversary issue which is on its way to me, and which I sincerely hope will safely arrive. May I express my very sincere thanks for this and my congratulations on your splendid Thirtieth Anniversary issue which was a really international achievement."

Last week, you will remember, when we closed our fund drive for this year, we urged readers to continue the good work by helping to increase circulation. Already we have gotten one response to that specific appeal in the shape of ten new subs garnered by a reader who proudly signs himself "Summer Soldier," thereby reversing an epithet. "As a matter of fact," he writes, "soldiering of this kind really is a bit easier in the summer, for me at least. I'm part of that 'weekend exodus' which Between Ourselves mentioned last week, and you find all sorts of interesting people at camps. Talk to them a while, show them a copy of the magazine, suggest that this is only a sample and they should *see* what's in other issues—and as likely as not you have a new constant reader for NM. If lots of your sub-gatherers would work at this you might have to forget fund appeals." We might, indeed—in fact, it's a better suggestion than we ourselves have been able to think up yet.

Another reminder of the NM weekend at Camp Colebrook, Colebrook River, Conn., June 20 to 22 inclusive. In addition to the general camp recreation, NM is planning a revue for Saturday night that will feature many of the American Youth Group plus several independent performers. There will also be dancing to a swing band. After-breakfast features will include a talk by Samuel Sillen on books and writers, and Joy Davidman on what makes Hollywood tick. A concert artist will give a piano recital and there will be a chalk talk by a well known cartoonist. A treasure hunt and a hound-and-hares chase, swimming, tennis, handball, badminton, archery, fishing . . . it should be as busy a weekend as anyone could wish. All for $10—including woodland trails and a private lake—with special arrangements for transportation at a minimum cost.

Who's Who

R. PALME DUTT is the editor of the British *Labour Monthly.* His new book, *Crisis of the British People,* will be published soon by Laurence and Wishart, London. . . . Richard Wright is the author of *Native Son.* . . . Adam Lapin is NM's Washington correspondent. . . . Corliss Lamont is the author of *You Might Like Socialism.* . . . Herbert Biberman is a movie director in Hollywood. . . . Theodore Draper was formerly NM's foreign correspondent. . . . Ben Wilkes is a free lance writer. . . . Arthur Fowler is a graduate student in history.

Flashbacks

ON June 16, 1935, two great Chinese Red armies met in Szechwan, bringing to a successful conclusion a brilliant strategic maneuver. These people's troops reminded the world that imperialist generals have no monopoly on military skill. . . . "War does not come by chance. . . . There is a definite cause for war, especially a modern war. . . . The master class has always brought a war and the subject class fought the battle. The master class has had all to gain and nothing to lose, and the subject class has had all to lose and nothing to gain. For saying these and similar things about World War I before the Socialist Convention of Ohio at Canton June 16, 1918, Eugene V. Debs was later sentenced to ten years in prison . . . And a memo for those who aren't satisfied to let God save the king: the Battle of Bunker Hill, the first serious battle of the War for Independence, was fought June 17, 177.

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NEW MASSES

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BAYONETING LABOR

Military dictatorship versus decent wages. The full meaning of "unlimited national emergency" now becomes clear. Destroying the democratic right to strike. An editorial.

IT HAS not taken long. Within a week after President Roosevelt created an "unlimited emergency," the real significance of his seizure of extraordinary powers becomes clear. In these columns seven days ago the editors of NEW MASSES declared: "It is one of the most obscene hypocrisies of this whole performance that the President speaks of saving our democracy. . . . What does democracy begin to mean when the President deliberately circumvents the laws of the land and gathers dictatorial powers into his own hands . . .?" The President himself has answered the question. *Every statement, every action he has made since the proclamation of an emergency has been directed against organized labor.*

He has with him the men of Wall Street bought off with fat contracts and promised a world to loot. He has usurped powers that he has yearned for ever since the beginning of the war. He has demanded of Congress the passage of a bill permitting the government to seize plants. The *Journal of Commerce* (June 3) cuts through any dissimulation he may wish to use to disguise the true meaning of this legislation: "Authoritative officials tonight indicated that one objective behind the bill was to give the Government powers to settle troublesome labor disputes."

But in actuality, the President has not waited for enabling legislation. He has already taken the powers for himself that his executive departments would receive if the Vinson bill forcing a "cooling off" period on labor, if the Ball bill compelling arbitration of labor disputes, if the suggested bill to ban Communists from working in industry, if any of the hundreds of other discriminatory and reactionary legislation were passed. Franklin D. Roosevelt has everything. Except the people. He hopes now to bend the people to his will, to impress them, to smash their organizations at the point of bayonets and machine guns.

He has forgotten nothing. His mentor in the old days, Woodrow Wilson, had a way with him. Remember the strike at the Bridgeport, Conn., munitions factory? Remember Wilson's letter to the strikers who refused to accept compulsory arbitration:

> I desire that you return to work and abide by the award. If you refuse, each of you will be barred from employment in any war industry in the community in which the strike occurs for a period of the year . . . and the draft boards will be instructed to reject any claim of exemption based on your alleged usefulness on war production.

Work or Fight. President Roosevelt revives the slogan for aviation workers at the North American plant in Inglewood, Calif., and lumber workers in the Pacific Northwest. The draft boards call militant unionists for service. The President "takes over" an airplane factory—and wages of workers are frozen, though the tremendous profits flow on just the same. (The North American Aviation Company, a du Pont-Morgan subsidiary, made $7,090,333 in profits in 1940 or $855 profit per worker employed.) His troops "converge" on picket lines, the Navy convoys strikebreakers at the shipbuilding yards. He outlaws strikes, killing American democracy to the tune of appropriate sanctimonious phrases.

But he is not doing so well. The working class refuses to be bludgeoned into line. That is the overwhelming significance of the woodworkers' defiance, of the plane workers' and aluminum workers' refusal to abandon their strikes.

There is one issue involved in these strikes, and only one. The issue is wages—wages to meet inflated prices, the catapulting cost of living. Woodworkers demand an increase of seven and one-half cents an hour; aviation workers demand a minimum scale of seventy-five cents an hour, a blanket raise of ten cents for all employes. The government shrieks "Red," "breakdown of defense production." But the issue is not new. It is the same demand that brought organization to the Ford Motor Co., that caused steel workers to strike at Lackawanna, Johnstown, Bethlehem, that precipitated the walkout of shipyard workers in Oakland and San Francisco, that has been the cause of all recent strikes. Out of each strike came the question: how does a decent wage undermine national defense? And further: how can democracy be defended if democracy is obliterated?

All the rest of the so-called "issues" are no more than embroidery added by the employers and the government. The lies are repeated, the truth is hidden zealously by the press. It is the old Hitler formula—lie and lie again, and the truth will die. The workers are sabotaging national defense. They are foreign agents. They are misled by crafty plotters.

What is this clamor about "subversive agitators"? They berate Wyndham Mortimer, organizer of the United Automobile Workers, who was among the first to bring unionism to Flint, Mich., and whose painstaking, careful plugging led to the successful organization of General Motors, Chrysler, and more recently, Vultee. They berate A. M. Orton of the woodworkers, who helped fight low wages and hazardous working conditions. But so have they excoriated every union leader who has fought for what the membership wanted and needed.

But what of Richard Frankensteen who denounces the aviation strike? He was lieutenant to the notorious Homer Martin, whom he deserted when Martin was exposed and on his way out of the UAW. It was Frankensteen who played politics with the AFL bureacracy in Detroit when the AFL was attempting to break the UAW. When he appeared at Inglewood, the strikers carried a placard of a donkey with Frankensteen's face, and the legend, "We all know this jackass."

The President has declared war on labor. At this moment, Philip Murray, president of the CIO, makes gestures approving the President's course. Philip Murray denounced the creation of the national Mediation Board. He supported the Allis-Chalmers strike, where the issue was in no way different from that confronting the woodworkers, the aviation workers, the shipyard workers. Mr. Murray has retreated dangerously. When he took office in November, he pledged himself to uphold the program of the CIO. This program demanded peace, organization, militant action, advance. John L. Lewis, by defying the national Mediation Board to break the mine strike, showed the way. Lewis' leadership forced the Mediation Board to approve the miners' demand for the elimination of the wage differential between North and South. But for his part, Mr. Murray reverses the position he held in the past, reverses the stand taken by Lewis, nullifies the program of the CIO.

The President moves swiftly toward fascism. Last November, NEW MASSES published the blueprint for the conscription of labor written by three assistants in the Department of Justice, for the *Harvard Law Review*. We quoted that section of the blueprint which said:

> As the experience of the World War indicates, slight notice is given to constitutional technicalities in time of stress. Any further or more detailed discussion of the constitutional aspects of federal control of labor would therefore seem especially quixotic at this time.

On this theory, President Roosevelt proceeds. But today labor is organized and resolute. The unions have shown their determination to fight. And their fight is that of all the people who would hold on to their liberties and to their precious democracy.

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BRITAIN AFTER TWENTY MONTHS

R. Palme Dutt tells what has happened to labor since September 1939. Aftermath of the People's Convention. Why the London "Daily Worker" was suppressed. Lessons for America.

London.

AFTER twenty months of war the controversies and divisions of the working class and democratic movement in this country are still great. But the recognition is spreading among wide sections that in the present urgent situation the most serious effort needs to be made to overcome these divisions and to find a common basis of action. Even though fuller unity, adequate to the great tasks which the war places squarely before the people, must necessarily await the slower process of clarification and agreement on the deeper issues raised by the war, it is already both possible and necessary to find elementary common ground in relation to the urgent immediate issues raised by the present reactionary drive of the powerful monopolist interests behind the government.

The outbreak of war temporarily shattered the powerful movement which was developing for unity and a broad popular front against the ruling Tory reaction, fascism, and the menace of war, and against the fatal official Labor policy of veiled coalition and refusal to lead a popular front. New alignments broke the old formations. As in the last war a whole leading stratum passed over. Not only the official Labor Party and Trades Union Congress leadership, which had already in the fateful years preceding the war, as in the fateful years preceding the last war, been pursuing a policy of veiled coalition with the government, passed over to open coalition (the interval between the declaration of support of the government at the outbreak of war, alongside formal "independence," to the final stage of ministerial coalition taking seven months in the last war and eight months in this war); but a whole stratum of leadership which had played an opposition role on the left in the years preceding the war passed over to the side of the ruling class. "National unity" replaced Left unity. The mass movement was thrown into confusion. The organized working class movement was seriously paralyzed by the political truce and the industrial truce. The need for working class and popular unity and independence against the triumphant reaction was greater than ever. But it was clear that it would have to find new forms; it would have to be built up painfully, step by step, from the heart of the rank and file, from all those who had stood true to the struggle, from the new masses awakened by the war, against the opposition and sabotage of all that leadership, whether Right or former Left, which had betrayed them.

BUT there was one important difference in the political situation and the alignment of parties from the outset of the last war. In the last war the advanced class conscious workers had not yet got their united political party. In this war they have had from the outset their own political party, which they had built up, consequent on the experience of the last war and the collapse of the old working class movement, through the intervening twenty years. This achievement was now to stand them in good stead. Through the mechanism of their party they were able rapidly to overcome the confusion in the ranks of the vanguard during the very first weeks of the war. This confusion temporarily affected also their party, which failed immediately to estimate correctly and adapt itself to the basically new world situation following on the outbreak of war and in consequence endeavored at first to combine old slogans with new in such a way as to produce contradictory slogans ("the war on two fronts"). As Lenin wrote in 1917:

> Too often has it happened when history has taken a sharp turn that even the most advanced of parties have been unable for a long time to adapt themselves to the new situation; they continue to repeat the slogans that were formerly true, but which now had no meaning, having lost that meaning as "suddenly" as the turn in history was "sudden." (Lenin, *On Slogans.)*

The democratic machinery, however, of the working class party, combined with its theoretical basis in Marxism-Leninism and its international outlook, enabled it very rapidly to correct this error. All the interminable and endlessly repetitive controversies and arguments which are today being trundled at exhaustive length through the literature of the Left, all the new positions which are successively announced with an air of discovery and which only repeat one or another exploded fallacy from the first position of the Communist Party, all the dilemmas and entanglements in which sincere supporters of the "two fronts" theory find themselves involved when they try to translate their theory into practice, were subjected to the most intensive analysis and critical review within the party in the fierce light of polemical discussion which followed the outbreak of war, were worked out to their final conclusions, and were finished with by the Communist Party within the first few weeks of the outbreak of war. The discussion was carried through every unit, organ, and group of the party, and ended in ninety-nine percent agreement on the basis of the inescapable conclusions from a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the international situation, including the new factors since the war of 1914, and the consequent tasks of the working class.

In this way, through the instrumentality of the party, the working class vanguard was able to reach a clear, firm, and united position as an organized political force in relation to the war within one month of its outbreak—a position which has since stood the test of events, and not only led to increased membership and influence of the party at a time when other organizations have gone downwards, but is winning increasing support from wider sections of the working class. The prediction of Ercoli in his report on the war question at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International six years ago has thus been proved correct:

> Can we assert that there will be no waverings or mistakes in our ranks if war breaks out? It would be imprudent to draw such a conclusion, because we know that the moment when war breaks out is the moment when the bourgeoisie will strive to exert its greatest influence on the working class and when the Communist vanguard will encounter a number of great difficulties. That which we can assert is that, in contradistinction to 1914, there will be in all countries not a few isolated comrades, but a solid and disciplined vanguard which will remain loyal to the revolutionary teachings of Marxism Leninism and which will undertake with all its power to apply these teachings in practice by following the example of the Russian Bolsheviks.

The clarification and mobilization of the working class vanguard, of its party, and of those sections close to the party and following its leadership, was the necessary first step. But it was only the first step. The main task remained to reach the masses of the workers to awaken understanding of their own independent interests and confidence in their own strength; to combat passivity, hopelessness, capitulation, the closing down of the working class movement and surrender to Toryism in the name of "national unity"; to kindle anew the spirit of working class internationalism to organize anew the common front of struggle, stage by stage, in forms corresponding to the new conditions, for the needs and interests of the workers and of all sections of the people.

This task can only be accomplished, especially in the earlier phases of a war, when even the most reactionary regime is able to count on the support of the majority of the population, by slow, patient, and tireless labor. But the lesson remains true that the masses learn by experience, and the task of the advanced workers is not to seek to impose ready-made doctrines, but to assist that learning. The experience of the people, as the war progresses, is on the side of the advance workers, and creates the conditions which make it possible to hasten the awakening.

The full theoretical understanding of imperialist war and its outcome, and of the necessary solution to the cruel dilemmas which it places before the people of every country dragged into its vortex, can only be firmly grasped by the politically trained class conscious workers who already understand the

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character of modern society and the conditions of the working class struggle for power. But wide sections of people, who are by no means in agreement with Communist theories, can see very clearly that the upper class reactionary rulers do not represent their interests; that in the name of "national unity" and "equality of sacrifice" the profiteers are making fortunes and the big combines are increasing their powers over the lives and livelihood of the people; that labor and small enterprise are conscripted, while wealth is begged for as a loan at interest and the big monopolies have taken control of the state machine. They can see the old friends of fascism and enemies of democracy in high places of power; that the reactionary rulers, while concealing their war aims, manifestly pursue aims of the old imperialist type; that, while speaking loudly of "democracy," they suppress the struggle for democracy in India, applauded the suppression of democracy in France, and attack it in Britain; that a Prince Starhemberg, the organizer of Austrian fascism, who fought by the side of Hitler in 1923, who was Mussolini's protege in Austria, is able to parade the London night clubs with a commission in the "Free French" forces, while tried anti-fascist fighters, with records of unexampled heroism, are sent to the concentration camps. They can see that the Labor Party and Trades Union Congress leaders have become mouthpieces of Tory policy, enforcing its decrees on the working class and closing down all independent working class activity and organization; that the rights and gains of generations of struggle are being thrown away; that the urgent needs of the people are neglected; that class policy reigns in the organization of food supplies; that the class struggle, so far from being ended with the political and industrial truce, rages with unabated fury, but in one-sided form, being waged with ruthless energy by the exploiters, while the workers' organizations are disarmed by their own leaders.

In this situation, at this stage of development, while deeper issues are still only dimly seen, the spontaneous demand arises from many quarters of the working class and from many sections of the people, irrespective of general viewpoints on the war or ultimate questions, for a stand to be made on this or that issue; for a common front in defense of urgent immediate needs and interests of the working people; for the defense of democratic rights; for the independence of the working class movement, and the ending of subservience to Toryism and the profiteers. The Communists, while continuing to conduct propaganda for their whole viewpoint and program, while seeking to win all these elements for the political struggle which can alone finally solve their problems, loyally cooperate and assist in every such common movement which is directed to promoting the needs and interests of the people, in whatever sphere, and however limited the immediate aims. They by no means seek to impose their general viewpoint on any such common movement, nor would they let any still uncleared differences on wider issues stand in the way of the broadest common front on immediate issues.

THE People's Convention at the beginning of this year represented the first coming together of these many and divers elements. The response to the People's Convention took by surprise its organizers nearly as much as the government spokesmen, the political experts, and the press representatives, and has kept it in the forefront of political attention ever since. The extent of that response revealed the ripeness, the eagerness for such a common rallying ground of working class and democratic collaboration. That first assembly was a landmark in the development of the war; it was a beacon whose rays found a reflection and whose message aroused an echo in every country in the world. But it was only a first beginning. It was the small beginning of a great movement. We may say small, despite the one and a quarter million represented; because those represented were largely the already politically awakened; they reached only to a fraction of those who must be reached. The sponsors of the People's Convention would be the first to recognize how much broader a front of cooperation and mass support needs to be organized; this broadening of the basis of support is now the immediate task of the People's Convention movement.

Since the holding of the People's Convention in January there have developed in various spheres further elementary forms of wider cooperation in relation to immediate issues. Most notable has been the united stand of supporters of democracy, irrespective of their opinions of the People's Convention and its program, against the British Broadcasting Co. ban on the employment of supporters of the convention: a stand which was strong enough to compel a partial retreat of the government. The National Council of Civil Liberties has from the outset of the war performed a courageous role whose value must be recognized by all supporters of democracy. More recently has come the announcement of the formation of the Press Freedom Committee on a broad basis of support. Within the Parliamentary Labor Party a growing minority has voted in the opposition lobby on a series of issues. Fifteen MPs (taking both divisions, and including tellers), including seven members of the Labor Party, registered their stand against the suppression of the *Daily Worker;* twenty-one (including tellers) for the amendment against the Household Means Test; thirty-eight (including tellers) for the amendment to the MacDonald Bill; forty gave their signatures on the issue of the BBC ban. This is the more noteworthy in a parliament whose obsolete, aging, and unrepresentative character grows the more conspicuous and universally admitted as the original 1935 confidence-trick election which gave rise to it passes into the mists of antiquity. All these are instructive signs of the possibilities and needs of the present situation.

Mr. Bevin Has His Troubles

IT WAS indeed an extraordinary convention that the British Labor Party held last week. For the first time in forty years resolutions from the floor were banned. Utilizing the notorious system of block-voting, adequate expression of rank and file opinion was thwarted. Delegates could not offer amendments to the Executive Committee statements on war and peace; they got the gag when they ventured to discuss such issues as the Hess mystery, profiteering, graft, the military situation, in fact anything that touched on the realities of British life today. A United Press dispatch referred to the "iron-handed leaders" who sought to steamroller any popular motion that might embarrass their Tory friends with whom they were now enjoying "national unity."

The convention was a sample of the way things were being run by the Bevin clique: a way which, it developed, had resulted in a dangerous decline in membership. The expulsion of Communists and the general atmosphere of terrorization had forced out some twenty-five percent of the party. This much was made clear: Mr. Bevin dare not permit the expression of working class opinion.

But as always, the people find ways to circumvent the "iron-handed men." Several times during the sessions gag rule was overthrown, as on the issue of the Kings Norton local which had been expelled because it refused to support a Tory in the by-election in accordance with the political truce. This action provoked discussion upon a fundamental issue: has labor the right to put forward a socialist policy in war time? The vote upon this question indicated the increasing rebelliousness of the membership: despite the clever manipulation of the hand-picked delegates more than half a million voted against the expulsion.

For the British people are preparing their case: the unity of popular forces for a position independent of the Tories is the reality emerging from the welter of treachery and tragedy on the British island today. This was further revealed by a subsequent convention held under auspices of the National Union of Journalists and the National Council for Civil Liberties on June 7. About 1,000 delegates, representing 2,000,000 members of 640 organizations including the Communists (Conservatives were conspicuously absent) adopted a resolution demanding freedom of the press, and truth from the government upon the conduct of the war. According to James MacDonald, writing from London in the New York *Times* June 8, an attack upon the Communists "was booed by a majority of the audience." This came as though in reply to the angry tirade against the People's Convention by the chairman of the Labor Party several days before. Mr. Bevin and his associates are doing their best to deliver for Churchill and the crown —but the stubborn workingman is developing ideas of his own.

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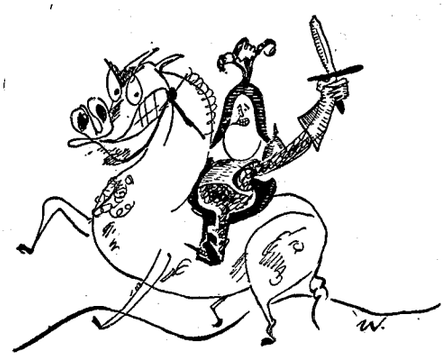
The government and the ruling class understood very well the significance of the People's Convention. They understood the significance of the first signs of crystallization of a working class and democratic opposition, which could rapidly win wide support, all the more as the official Labor Party appeared to many of its own members, no less than its critics, to be passing out of the picture save as a part of the governmental machinery, and the Coalition Labor Ministers were becoming regarded as indistinguishable to the uninitiated public eye from their Tory colleagues. They understood that politics abhors a vacuum, and that the People's Convention, which already occupied the field, could in the future development of events, unless it were smashed at the outset, rally to itself all the streams of popular awakening against a government whose essentially reactionary monopoly-capitalist character was only thinly concealed by the presence of a limelight rhetorician at its head and a top dressing of Labor bosses.

THEREFORE from that week in January the fiercest offensive has been let loose and maintained against the People's Convention. Herein has lain the central battleground of the political situation. The previous conspiracy of silence has been replaced by a blaze of publicity. For sixteen and a half months from the outset of war the *Daily Worker* had been left untouched. Within nine days of the People's Convention the *Daily Worker* was suppressed. Thereby it was laid down that no opposition daily newspaper was to be allowed in Britain. A movement with one and a quarter million adherents must not be allowed any press organ, or even to start a new press organ (of course on the strength of paper control regulations, which as mysteriously disappear as soon as it is a question of starting a new organ of official propaganda like *Die Zeitung),* at the same time as the tens of millions of copies of the official press churn out lying propaganda against it. The abuse of the People's Convention in the official press would paper a broad high road from Land's End to John o' Groats. The lies, made in all the fat confidence of the lack of facilities for reply, could teach points to Goebbels.

It has not been only a question of a press offensive, or of direct governmental action as in the suppression of the *Daily Worker.* All the familiar weapons of economic power, of control of the means of expression, of control of the livelihood of people, of intimidation and victimization, have been brought into play. Reports of the refusal of halls or printing for the People's Convention have come in from all parts of the country. The employers in the factories in conjunction with the secret police have instituted elaborate spying systems in order to victimize the militant workers who support the People's Convention. Professional people have been threatened with the loss of their means of livelihood if they would not recant. The BBC ban was a direct governmental signal, the lead from a state monopoly giving the cue to all employers; only the strength of popular agitation compelled a retreat, and Churchill had to be put up to cover the retreat; but the statements of Duff-Cooper sufficiently showed the real line of thought of Toryism. All the machinery of Transport House—passive enough when it is a question of taking up any agitation for the demands of the workers—has been active overtime to terrorize every working class organization against participation in the common movement and to institute the most elaborate enquiries, threats, or expulsions against every prominent individual labor, trade union, or cooperative supporter of the People's Convention.

The tactics of the government offensive are crystal clear. The essence of those tactics are to *disrupt any united movement.* Division of the people means strength for the ruling class oligarchy; any beginnings of unity, extending beyond the politically conscious minority, would be fatal. From this follows the key point of the offensive. The key point of the offensive is to seek to *drive a wedge between the working class vanguard and its allies.* Hence the concentration of the attack on the Communist Party as the "hidden hand" behind the convention, as "dominating" it and "maneuvering" with the "innocents" participating, as "exploiting" the just "grievances" of the people, as pursuing sinister "ulterior aims" not discoverable in the program of the movement, but known to these eagle-eyed observers, civil war, destruction of the national independence of the British people, "peace at any price," and "surrender to Hitler."

This phantasmagoria of lies and calumnies, which is stoutly maintained against every proved fact of program, documents, or representation, is not an inebriated editorial writer's nightmare. It is a perfectly clear and conscious tactical line. At all costs it is necessary to seek to sow discord, suspicion, division between Communists and non-Communists; it is necessary to isolate the most advanced political workers, the truest defender of the interests of the people, from the other sections of the people; to break the alliance that is developing; to hold separate, dispersed, and impotent the manifold awakening sections of the people from that core which is the most faithful, fearless, and politically experienced fighting detachment of the people, the militant class conscious workers; to teach the masses that their true friends are the monopoly capitalists and not the militant working class and its party. Hence the campaign of lies and calumnies, which it becomes wearisome to have again and again to refute, but which we must tirelessly continue to smash day in and day out, in order to defeat the tactics of the class enemy.



So far as the Communist Party is concerned, the Communists will know how to defend themselves. They are used of old to the unscrupulous methods of fanning the flames of jingo prejudice against socialists in wartime who remain faithful to the class struggle; they knew them in the last war; they are repeated in this war. Such methods are familiar from the gutter sheets of Tory jingoism; the bottom pit of shame is reached when they are used by those who dare to call themselves "socialists." "How British Communists Work for Hitler: by Harold Laski" is blazoned in flaming type across the front page of the New York *Nation* of February 15. So these faithful allies of their own imperialists "report" the movement abroad. Even so in the last war the Clydeside strikers, whose record is today the imperishable heritage and pride of the entire working class movement from that period of shame and collapse of the official movement, were assailed with the British-forged telegram of "Congratulations from the Kaiser." So Lenin was indicted by the pigmy Kerensky, and a warrant issued for his arrest, with a whole dossier of documents to "prove" it, as an "agent of the German General Staff." So Liebknecht was denounced in Germany as a "paid agent of the Entente." Every worker who has been through a strike knows how to assess at its true worth this type of reptile propaganda of the enemy class.

Yes: the Communists have their "ulterior aims." It is not necessary to search secret history gossip columns of the Sunday press to discover them. They blazon them themselves from the housetops. The "ulterior aims" of Communists are to end the exploitation of man by man; to abolish capitalist slavery, its wars, and its poverty; to unite the nations of the earth in brotherhood and socialist freedom; to hasten the advance of the united classless society of liberated humanity. We know that the path to this goal is not rose-colored; that there are no guarantees of safe and easy ways, clinging to the old, while longing for the new; that we must be prepared for rough passages in the course of the relentless break-up of the old dying civilization. We know that the way forward is the path of the class struggle, of the international unity of the workers; that every path which seeks to align the workers with their own imperialists and to make them the slaves of the reactionary plans of their masters is a false path, leading, not to salvation, but to greater suffering and destruction; and that our path is the only path offering speediest hope for the salvation and liberation of the masses of the people from the miseries and dangers which today confront them.

But the ultimate issues of the final struggle for power and the solution of the crisis let loose by decaying imperialism and its war are not yet the immediate issues which confront

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Michaels

Gasless Sunday

the masses of the people for decision today or tomorrow. An enormous development of the political situation and mass awakening, such as we are under no illusions of imagining exists as yet, will be necessary before such a stage is reached; and the fulfillment of such a development will leave few of the landmarks familiar in present controversy standing as they are at present. Hence the barren, abstract, metaphysical character of much of the present controversy on the Left, which speculates on future hypotheses *as an excuse for opposing and sabotaging present elementary simple common tasks*. It is quite correct that it is necessary for all class conscious workers, for all serious Marxists, whose duty is to see ahead and to think for the whole class, to reach clearness on these deeper issues and endeavor to spread understanding as widely as possible. But the present immediate practical tasks of the mass movement are at a far more elementary stage. The present immediate urgent task is to reach the very beginning of a common working class and democratic stand against the overwhelming reactionary offensive. Whoever utilizes ultimate differences to oppose such a common stand is playing the game of reaction.

The program of the Communist Party is not identical with the program of the People's Convention. The program of the People's Convention is the Eight Points adopted at the first assembly in January—and no other. These Eight Points are such as every serious worker and democrat cannot but support. They are common ground. Indeed, even the critics are compelled always to preface their remarks by declaring that the Eight Points are unexceptionable; but they then proceed to invent hidden meanings which are not there, and which they solemnly proceed to declare are the more sinister because they are not there. Could lunacy go further? But these Eight Points already provide a most fruitful basis of cooperation for all workers and democrats at the present stage, irrespective of differences of viewpoint on other more controversial issues. They provide a basis on which men and women of divers outlooks, and coming from many sections, can cooperate and are cooperating; united in the determination to secure the realization of these Eight Points, to build up the broadest common movement in their support, and to protect the interests of the people; and united in the determination to solve in common step by step the successive further problems as they arise in the realization of this program, as the movement develops.

R. Palme Dutt.

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NOT MY PEOPLE'S WAR

Richard Wright reports to the Writers Congress on "the dogged reluctance" of the Negro people to accept FDR's propaganda. "Negro memory recalls that those same words were used in 1918."

SOME of you may wonder why a writer, at a congress of writers, should make the theme of war the main burden of a public talk. Some of you may be expecting to hear writers discuss and compare books and stories. Others of you may be expecting to hear what writers think of what has been recently written, or of what other writers are now engaged in writing. Well, I, for one, find such an order impossible to fill. My eyes are drawn toward war. Frankly and unfortunately, there is not much else in this world tonight that means one-half as much as war. Every single human aspiration is dwarfed by the forces of war that grip and restrict the movement of men today. War overshadows and dominates all other meanings and activities. War is hourly changing the look of reality. War is creating a new and terrifying subject matter for writers.

It is, however, with reluctance that we think, feel, and talk of war. But we have no choice. Our preoccupation with war and destruction constitutes a sort of invidious tribute which we writers must pay to the men who rule the so-called Western world, the men who deceived the peoples of the earth in the first world war by fabricating their Fourteen Points of Peace, the men who deluded hundreds of millions of people by pledging that all covenants would be openly arrived at, the men who naively and proudly declared only a few short years ago that all peoples would have the right to determine their own destinies, the men who declared so comically only a few short months ago that we would enjoy "peace in our time." And today we continue to pay invidious tribute to the men who are conjuring up another program, the Four Freedoms, for another war, and who are today blindly plunging the world into another protracted conflict whose outcome is not in sight.

So the nature of my remarks here tonight is in the form of a report to you upon a new array of subject matter which the war is bringing into view in Negro life in the United States. The texture of what I have to say deals with the state of feeling that exists among the Negro people in this country toward the current war. That state of feeling is so clear and unmistakable that the war leaders of our nation recognize and fear it. It is the *one* thing on the war horizon which they cannot "explain away." Indeed, the Negro's experience with past wars, his attitude toward the present one, his attitude of chronic distrust, constitute the most incisive and graphic refutation of every idealistic statement made by the war leaders as to the alleged democratic goal and aim of this war.

Against the background of Hitler's treatment of the Jews, the Negroes' plight in this country is what even labor-baiting Westbrook Pegler quaintly calls an "embarrassment" to the efforts of the war leaders! Throughout the high, ruling circles of the nation, the attitude toward the Negro is: Oh, why should we be bothered with this old Negro question? Or, The Negro issue is a dead issue. Or, Listen, all you do in bringing up the Negro issue is to make things worse for them. Or, Oh, the Negroes. . . . Why, they're getting along all right. And so on. The Negro people are aware of this, and their attitude toward this war is conditioned by it.

The dogged reluctance on the part of the Negro people to support this war is undeniably justified and is rooted deep in historical background. Bitter and obstinate memories separate 15,000,000 Negroes from this war, memories of hypocrisy, of glib promises easily given and quickly betrayed, of cynical exploitation of hope, of double-dealing, memories which are impossible to forget or ignore.

My report shall deal with these memories, what they are, and how they have molded the feelings, stained the vision, and colored the attitudes of the Negroes in America toward war, and of how these memories have served as a basis for the Negroes' definition of this war.

Negro memory informs us with clarity that there are but ten points of difference between Wilson's Fourteen Points of Peace and Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, and that these ten points of difference mean precisely nothing insofar as the Negro is concerned.

Negro memory remembers with shame those honeyed words and phrases used by those leaders who persuaded him to hope for a betterment of his lot after the first world war, and Negro memory remembers the bitter disillusionment that followed in the wake of that war "to make the world safe for a democracy" which Negroes have never known.

Negro memory recalls the brazen official orders of the generals of the American Expeditionary Force which were issued on Aug. 7, 1918, to the French people and the French Army, urging them to segregate and insult the Negro troops, to refrain from honoring their gallantry; orders which declared:

> We must prevent the rise of any pronounced degree of intimacy between French officers and black officers. We may be courteous and amiable with these last, but we cannot deal with them on the same plane as with the white American officers without deeply wounding the latter. We must not eat with them, must not shake hands with them or seek to talk with them outside of the regular requirements of military service.
>
> We must not commend too highly the black American troops, particularly in the presence of (white) Americans. It is all right to recognize their good qualities and their services, but only in moderate terms, strictly in keeping with the truth. Military authorities cannot intervene directly in this question, but they can through the civil authorities who exercise some influence on the population.

This same cynicism accompanies the present call to war; this same falsehood walks side by side with Roosevelt's attempt to preserve what he calls the "majesty of the human soul"!

Negro memory still recollects the humiliations heaped upon the Gold Star Negro war mothers who were sent to France in cattle boats to see the graves of their dead in Flanders, while white war mothers sailed in first class on luxury liners.

Negro memory cannot forget the lynching of a young Negro soldier, Private Felix Hall, who was found only a few weeks ago in Fort Benning, Ga., still clad in the uniform of the United States Army, hanging from a tree; and Negro memory links this lynching to the memory of the many Negroes who were lynched in their United States Army uniforms during and after the first world war.

Negro memory knows that the same program of job discrimination which accompanied the first world war accompanies the second world war, but with a wider scope and in an intensified degree.

Negro memory has not forgotten that Congress has yet to pass an anti-lynching bill, and that the poll tax laws still disfranchise millions of poor blacks as well as poor whites in the South.

Negro memory tells us that Atlanta, Ga., was our Marne and Brownsville, Texas, was our Chateau-Thierry; what happened to us after we came back from the desperate struggles in Flanders will never be forgotten; it is written into the pages of our blood, into the ledger sheets of our bleeding bodies, into the balance statements in the lobes of our brains.

In short, Negro memory in the United States is forced to recognize that the character of the present war in no wise differs from the previous world war. Moreover, there is ample evidence at hand that the current war is nakedly and inescapably an imperialist war, directed against the Negro people and working people and colonial people everywhere in this world.

From the Negro point of view, what is this evidence? I cite the following: On October 9 of last year, the White House secretary, one Stephen T. Early, after a conference between Roosevelt and the so-called Negro leadership, announced to the public the following statement:

"It is the policy of the War Department that services of the Negroes will be utilized on a fair and equitable basis."

Immediately following this lip-service to democracy, following this sweeping idealistic falsehood, the White House secretary went on to announce the *true* policy:

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The policy of the War Department is not to intermingle colored and white enlisted personnel in the same regimental organizations. This policy has been proven satisfactory over a period of years, and to make changes would produce situations destructive of morale and detrimental to the preparations for national defense.

Parenthetically, I'd like to ask this audience a question: If the United States is really anxious to stop Hitler, does it not seem logical that the morale of the Negro and white troops of the International Brigade, who beat back the fascists from the gates of Madrid, is a good morale for our troops? I'd like to ask, has there ever fought a more determined army than that wall of men, black and white, who, standing side by side for many months, endured all that Germany and Italy had to hurl at them? Evidently, that is *not* the kind of morale they are planning to instill into the United States Army, which is being created allegedly to fight fascism and spread the Four Freedoms.

The White House secretary went on to state the "democratic" policy of the crusade for the Four Freedoms:

"For similar reasons, the War Department does not contemplate assigning colored reserve officers other than those of the Medical Corps and Chaplains to the existing Negro combat units of the regular army."

In view of the above fascist statement, one must conclude that, insofar as the Negro is concerned, it *is* an imperialist war, a war which continues and deepens discriminatory tactics against the Negro people, against progressive people, against labor unions, professionals, and intellectuals. Such a statement reduces Roosevelt's Four Freedoms to a metaphysical obscenity!

How is it possible for any sincere or sane person to contend that the current war, World War II, is a crusade for freedom, for the "majesty of the human soul," for a full life, in the face of official utterances which categorically reject the very concept of freedom and democracy?

In England the Social-Democratic war leaders are more open about what policies they intend to pursue after the war in relation to the working class and minorities generally. Ernest Bevin, a British labor leader, in a recent article in the *Nation,* gives us a hint when he states: (I paraphrase this) "We must feed the hunger in the head and the heart, or we must cease to create hunger of the head and the heart in the millions." May we not call this the beginning of his majesty's ideology of British fascism?

The problems facing the Negro people in the United States lie squarely within the continental boundaries of the United States. We Negroes have no issues to settle in Mexico. We Negroes have no issues to settle in Brazil. We Negroes have no issues to settle in Martinique. We Negroes have no issues to settle in the Argentine. We Negroes have no issues to settle in the Azores or the Cape Verde Islands. And, above all, we Negroes have no issues to settle in Dakar.

The Artists and Writers Congress

RICHARD WRIGHT'S essay on the Negro People and the War was read at the opening session of the Congress in Defense of Culture, held June 6-8 in New York City under the auspices of the League of American Writers, the American Artists Congress, and the United American Artists (CIO). This congress was an event of far-reaching significance. It marked a maturing of the progressive forces among the writers and artists of the country, a clarification of their purposes and a strengthening of their bonds with the people such as has characterized no previous event of this kind. From the opening mass meeting, at which, in addition to Mr. Wright, Dashiell Hammett, Genevieve Taggard, Samuel Putnam, Rockwell Kent, Dr. Robert K. Speer, and Representative Vito Marcantonio spoke, till the final session devoted to poetry and folk songs, the congress pulsated with the positive values it represented, with its dedication to struggle against war and fascism.

Over 500 delegates and fraternal delegates (including a number from trade unions)—more than at any previous congress—took part in the proceedings. They voted a strong resolution against the war, denouncing it as "a brutal, shameless struggle for the redivision of empires—for profits, territories, markets." Reaffirming their determination to defend the free culture which is the birthright of the American people, the writers declared their opposition to reaction's attacks on civil liberties, to all attempts to divide, weaken, or destroy trade unions, and to the growing threat of censorship. They expressed their support of the Chinese people and called for the defense of the independence and culture of Latin America against Yankee imperialism.

One of the high points of the congress was the general session Sunday afternoon at which Lynd Ward, Alvah Bessie, Samuel Sillen, and John Howard Lawson read papers that brought standing ovations from the audience. The craft sessions dealt with the specific problems of novelists, artists, dramatists, poets, screen writers, labor journalists, young writers, juvenile writers, and Latin American cultural relations.

Dashiell Hammett was unanimously elected president of the League of American Writers. He succeeds Donald Ogden Stewart, who was chosen one of the vice-presidents, along with John Howard Lawson, Meridel Le Sueur, Albert Maltz, George Seldes, Erskine Caldwell, and Richard Wright. Theodore Dreiser was elected honorary president and was also given the Randolph Bourne award for outstanding services to culture and peace.

To those who attended its sessions the congress was an inspiring demonstration that the genuine spokesmen of the American people are not retreating. In forthcoming issues NEW MASSES plans to publish a special article evaluating the congress, as well as several of the many distinguished papers which were read.

Our primary problem is a domestic problem, a problem concerned with the processes of democracy at home. We need jobs. We need shelter. We urgently need an enormous increase in health, school, recreational, and other facilities. We need to see the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution enforced. We need to see the Bill of Rights translated into living reality. We need to see anti-lynching bills and anti-poll tax bills passed by the Congress of the United States. We need to see Congress guarantee the right of labor to organize, to bargain collectively, to strike in defense of their hard won standards of living when they deem it necessary.

We are being told to wait until the war is over to fight for these things; Negro memory recalls that those same words were used in the first world war. We are skeptical. We no longer trust promises. We prefer to fight now. We will not retreat. If this is a war for democracy, for freedom, then we fight in it, for democracy, for freedom. We shall fight as determinedly against those who deny freedom at home as we shall fight against those who deny it to others abroad.

Is it not clear that the whole movement toward war in the United States has taken upon its shoulders the task of defeating the progressive moves of the Negro people and the laboring masses throughout the country? To ask the question is to answer it in the affirmative, and we state bluntly that no honest man can claim to be a liberal, a democrat, and support such a program for war. We say that this nation's strongest defense is a powerful democracy at home.

Who can deny that the Anglo-American hatred of Negroes is of the same breed of hate which the Nazis mete out to Jews in Germany? If there are any of you who are in doubt as to the character of this war, then your attention is called to the fact that throughout the history of this country, the attitude of the nation toward the Negro has been an infallible barometer of the amount of corruption and reaction that is being plotted or consummated. The Negro people, during periods of revolutionary fervor and general social advance, have enjoyed relative degrees of progress and security, and, conversely, during periods of imperialist war adventures and reaction, the Negroes have been the first to feel the oppressive restrictions.

One of the main purposes of this report on the state of feeling among Negroes is to inform you emphatically that reaction and restrictions are hitting us now, that lynching is on the increase, that a wave of terror impends, not only against us, but against you.

A few nights ago, the following words were spoken by Secretary of State Cordell Hull over the radio:

The key to their economic program is contained in one word—conquest. Every territory that they conquer is reduced forthwith to an economic master-and-slave relationship. The economic structure of the enslaved country is forcibly reshaped and sys-

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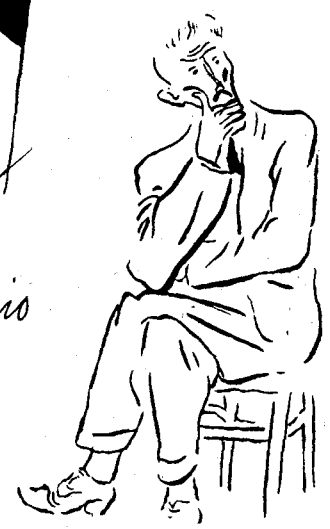
AT THE WRITERS AND ARTISTS CONGRESS

John Howard Lawson

Richard Wright

CONGRESSMAN
V. Marcantanio



Dashiell Hammett

Genevieve Taggard

Donald Ogden Stewart

Alvah Bessie

Enrique Gil Gilbert
ECUADOR

H.W.L Dana

Marc Blitzstein

William Gropper

Sketches by several congress artists

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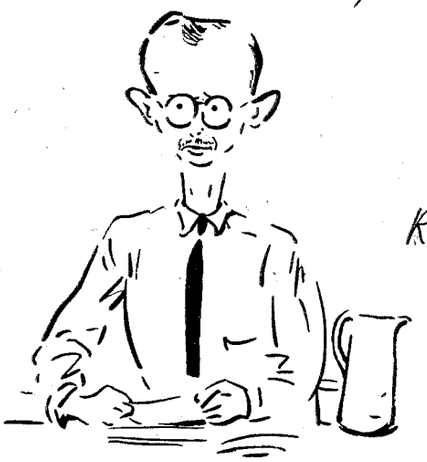
Rockwell Kent

Art Young



Samuel Putnam

Ruth McKenney

Lynd Ward

Samuel Sillen

Clifford Odets

Chu Tong CHINA

H. Gluntenkamp

Mike Gold

Chet La More

Hugo Gellert

Louis Lozowick

Harry Gottlieb

Almanac Singer

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"Sorry, ma'am, no butter."

tematically subordinated to the economy of the ruling or conquering country. Within the entire tributary area, autarchy or economic self-sufficiency is set up as the central feature of economic policy. At the center of this widespread web of captive nations, the master country wields its vastly enlarged powers. . . .

The moment I heard those words, I felt and thought that the Secretary of State was describing the policy of the United States toward its single largest minority, the Negro people. Then again I thought that maybe he was describing the policy of the United States toward Mexico, or some other country in Central or South America. I reasoned as follows: The Negro people, 15,000,000 strong, represent a captured nation over which the forty-eight states wield a vast power, economic, political, social, and otherwise. And, truly, the United States has earned the name of "enemy" in South America. But as I listened, I was soon set aright. I discovered that the Secretary of State was not describing the imperialist policy of the United States, but the imperialist policy of the German High Command! The two policies were so identical that I could not distinguish between them!

Time and again, during the course of this war, I have been struck by the startling similarity of the pronouncements, ideologies, and aims of the two warring camps. Free trade, that is, the right of powerful nations to exploit weak nations, is the battle-cry that lies beneath Roosevelt's grandiose Four Freedoms and Halifax's more naive and simple desire "just to win the war," that is, to help Britain to keep what she has won through conquest. The entire military strategy of this war has been one long process of two powerful imperialist groups of nations to grab and capture raw materials, new markets, or entire nations whose populations would be compelled to purchase the manufactured products of the stronger nations.

Roosevelt praises China and promises her a share of his Four Freedoms. Yet the Dies committee swoops down upon those citizens in this country who are trying to help China; the Dies committee spies upon those who demand embargoes against Japan; the Dies committee spies upon Negroes who are seeking for an extension of democracy at home. The Chinese would do well to inspect all Trojan Horses from Washington and inquire into the health of other peoples who have had a good stiff dose of American aid, such as the Negroes, the Mexicans, and so forth.

Hourly the radio assures us of the nobility of England's mission in the world, and they would have us believe that India would be better off under England's rule than under the Nazis'. It never seems to occur to them that perhaps the Indians would like to be let entirely alone. England waged a successful fight recently against Italian imperialism in Ethiopia, but she still has to grant the Ethiopian people their independence.

The cry of the Negro people today is for peace. The cry of America today is for peace. The cry of the common people of the world today is for peace.

The Soviet Union and its leaders stand today as living testimony to the profound hatred of war and to the sincere love of peace that resides in the hearts of the common people of the world. Here is a nation that owes its very existence to the fact that its common people dared lift their voices for peace.

Writers, artists, educators, all men who exert or wield influence in the world should proceed diligently and fearlessly to prepare the minds of millions of people caught in the mesh of war to answer the call for peace when it comes.

And that call is surely coming. The universal demand for peace is the secret weapon of the masses of the common people! It is a weapon which Hitler, Churchill, and Roosevelt fear more than any bomb! Do not all of you remember the futile rage and despair with which the English and American press greeted the treaty of peace signed by the Soviet Union and Finland after a brief spell of fighting? There was a sinister meaning behind that rage; the desire of the British government and the United States government was for a continuance of that war! The panic, the hate, the uneasiness which informs the chancelleries and the state departments of the governments of the world today is added testimony to the fear that exists among those who dread to hear the call for peace sound throughout the world.

The voice of the common man has not yet been heard in this war, and the common people have something to say about what happens in this world. A Hitler victory will not end this war. An English victory will not end this war. And America's entrance into this war will not decide its ultimate outcome. Those facts comprise the most optimistic aspect of this war; it is what separates this war from all other wars. And that is why the warring nations dare not mention their war aims, save in but the most general terms. They are afraid.

When the voice sounds for peace, the Negro people will answer it.

RICHARD WRIGHT.

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HOW OPM CREATES SHORTAGES

Adam Lapin tells why there will be serious scarcities for consumer use in steel, aluminum, oil, and power. Monopolies' dollar-a-year men want it that way. Why.

Washington.

WILLIAM P. WITHEROW, chairman of the National Association of Manufacturers, is no doubt a hard-boiled, prosaic businessman. But he reached real heights of lyricism when he extolled the virtues of OPM's dollar-a-year men to the Buffalo convention of the Edison Electric Institute. Not even George Washington or Abraham Lincoln could match the statesmanship of these business executives in government, Witherow said. "Nowhere and at no time has the United States been blessed with better leadership than is found in the names of Knudsen, Hillman, Stettinius, Biggers, Nelson, Batt, Glancy, and others. These gentlemen have only one dominating interest, and that is patriotic devotion to their country."

Big business has every reason to feel satisfied with its representatives in the Office of Production Management. It is now clear that the OPM boys have emerged victorious in the battle with "New Dealers" over restricted industrial production versus full production, over whether or not industry should be required to expand to meet consumer needs. With the aid of the OPM, the nation's major corporations have succeeded in blocking the plans of the expansionists.

It is true that there are surface indications that some large-scale expansion is about to get under way. The Reynolds Metals Co., the long-thwarted competitor of the Aluminum Co. of America, has been granted substantial RFC loans. The steel industry has announced plans to expand capacity by 10,000,000 tons. And the oil companies have been talking about new tankers and new pipe lines to relieve the acute shortage in the East. Harold Ickes, long regarded as a foe by the oil companies, has been placed by the President in charge of oil supply. And Leon Henderson, another New Dealer, is head of the Office of Price Administration and Civilian Supply.

These are all pyrrhic victories for the so-called New Deal wing of the administration. The fact is that Henderson and Ickes will have to perform their functions under the conditions created by the OPM no-expansion boys. More important, the dollar-a-year crowd has succeeded in stalling so long that no genuine expansion of production can be realized within the immediate future. It will take two years to build new steel plants, and a year and a half to build new aluminum plants and new oil pipe lines.

IN THE MEANTIME, there will be serious shortages, particularly for consumer use, in steel, aluminum, oil, and power, as well as dozens of other products like copper, zinc, and drugs. Men like Henderson and Ickes will have the task of administrating shortages and they are already adjusting themselves to this situation. Henderson, once the apostle of expanded production, is now proposing stiff taxes on consumer goods to cut down consumer purchasing power in order to make way for arms production. Ickes is issuing scare-head statements urging gasless Sundays, less oil for use in heat in homes, and daylight saving time so consumers will use less power. At this point it is even helpful to the dollar-a-year men to have "New Dealers" around to take the curse off themselves.

This is by no means to give the impression that because "New Dealers" are filtering into positions in the "defense" program that the dollar-a-year men are relinquishing their places of power. Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., former chairman of US Steel and one of the opponents of steel expansion, is still head of the crucially important priorities set-up. Walter S. Tower, head of the American Iron and Steel Institute, who formerly was in charge of the Defense Commission's iron and steel section, is now one of the officials on Stettinius' priorities board. Tower made his position clear when he told the American Iron and Steel Institute recently that the members of the steel industry "have felt sound in their position that any forced or abnormal rate of expansion of steel making capacity is not now needed or justified." Tower's place as one of OPM's leading steel experts was taken by W. A. Hauck of the Lukens Steel Co. At the vital spot of priorities, which is so important to the big steel companies in retaining their monopolistic position, the dollar-a-year boys are still dominant.

They can also be expected to take care of themselves in the new industry committee which is to consult with the OPM on steel expansion. Three of the seven members represent US Steel, Republic Steel, and Bethlehem. The man who will be in charge of the alleged expansion program for OPM is another dollar-a-year man, S. R. Fuller, president of the huge rayon trust, the American Bemberg Corp.

SIMILAR CONTROL of the situation exists in almost every case where shortages are likely to arise in the near future. The chief of OPM's petroleum and natural gas unit is Robert E. Wilson, vice-chairman of Standard Oil's Pan-American Petroleum and Transport Co. The OPM's most important power consultant is Charles W. Kellog, president of the Edison Electric Institute. Kellog directly contradicted Ickes and the Federal Power Commission and experts in a speech to the recent convention of the institute which he heads. There was more than enough generating capacity, he said. No new expansion was necessary. This was a little too much, and the OPM felt it necessary to issue a little statement calling Kellog to task.

These men can be expected to continue to do the right thing by big business. And what is more important they, together with Knudsen and Stettinius, helped to create a situation which made shortages inevitable. Now that shortages have arisen, they will play a prominent part in distributing the available supply so that the interests of monopoly and profits will come first.

THE SHORTAGES which now face the nation's consumers are in almost every instance artificial in nature. Certainly this is clear in the case of aluminum. Shortages in aluminum are no startling developments, but the result of monopoly's time-honored practices. The Aluminum Co. of America (ALCOA), Mellon's empire, is the sole producer of aluminum in this country. As far back as 1931, through a Canadian subsidiary, it was instrumental in organizing an international cartel known as the Alliance Aluminum Co. French, Swiss, German, and British companies were parties to the agreement to curtail production, fix minimum world prices, and divide world markets. It is a fact that the Aluminum Co. supplies ninety-three percent of our domestic market; only seven percent is imported. In exchange for such friendly cooperation from the foreign companies, ALCOA for years has refrained from selling aluminum ingot outside the United States. In 1934 the German Aluminum Co., under Hitler's prodding, threatened to break the cartel unless it could produce unlimited quantities of aluminum for domestic use. The other companies agreed, but not without exacting a tribute. German Aluminum had to agree to buy one pound of aluminum from the cartel for every pound it exported to other markets. As a result of the new arrangement, Germany now produces about 400 percent more aluminum than the United States. ALCOA's production in 1939 came to 327,000,000 pounds, but army officials have estimated that at least 1,400,000,000 pounds annually are needed for military purposes alone. Present aluminum capacity will produce less than 30,000 planes and the President has called for 50,000 a year.

Not only is there a distinct shortage of aluminum, but magnesium is also becoming very scarce. Magnesium is a metal which has many competitive features that might become dangerous to aluminum. So ALCOA did the only thing an efficient monopoly can do, and made agreements to regulate the production and sale of magnesium. ALCOA, the Dow Chemical Co., the only producer of magnesium in this country, and the Nazi company, I. G. Farbenindustrie, signed an agreement in 1927 to limit the production and

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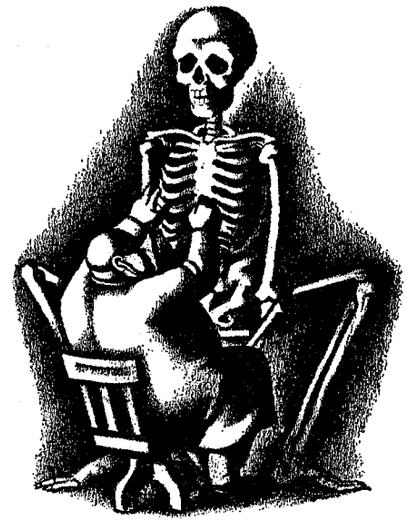
sale of magnesium products, control the price, and pool all patents.

Behind all the statements issued by Stettinius and other OPM officials during the last months of 1940 and right through February 1941, that there was no shortage of aluminum, was ALCOA's desire to keep competitors out of the field. The dollar-a-year men, favorable to ALCOA, gave the Reynolds Metals Co. which was trying to horn into the field a run for its money. OPM's consultant in aluminum and magnesium is Grenville R. Holden who admitted to the Truman Senate Committee that when he thinks of aluminum, he thinks of ALCOA. Since Holden believed that it was "difficult to find an expert on aluminum who had not had some connection with the Aluminum Co." he listened only to ALCOA's assurances that there would be no shortage. William L. Batt, deputy director of OPM's Production Division, however, recently told the Truman committee that for 1942 there "will be very little aluminum for civilian requirements," and just about enough only for direct military needs. There will not be enough for indirect military needs, not to speak of consumer requirements. Another part of the aluminum scandal is the make-up of the OPM committee which decides on aluminum priorities. The two industry representatives are directly controlled by ALCOA and General Motors. As a result, the automobile industry, chemicals, du Pont's rayon and nylon have done exceedingly well by themselves in getting aluminum for 1942. Small textile companies as well as aluminum fabricators and other businesses which need aluminum are being forced to shut down.

As far as power is concerned, the Federal Power Commission for years maintained that more power expansion was necessary. A few days ago Leland Olds, chairman of the Federal Power Commission, gave a very moderate explanation of the real situation in this respect when he said:

> Ever since the National Power Survey, begun in 1933, the Commission has consistently sought to prevent power shortages by long range forecasts of power requirements, which have continually indicated the need for increased generating capacity. Many utilities increased their generating capacities as a result of these forecasts; though few of them did so to the extent indicated by the surveys to be necessary for ample power supply.

But the power trust was anxious to jack up rates rather than to get expanded facilities. They not only fought expansion of the privately owned utilities, but staged their now widely known battle against TVA. And more recently, since the inauguration of the Roosevelt arms program, Kellog and the other power trust boys of OPM combated new expansion despite the obviously increased demand. Even Ickes' suggestion of extending daylight savings time throughout the nation in order to conserve power has the OPM power boys in a dither. Why "sacrifice" all the electric power used by consumers in that extra hour just to conserve for military needs? They want to have their cake and eat it too.



A. Blashko

The last conscript

Certainly it has been no secret for a long time that the tremendous demands of the arms program would cause a shortage in steel for consumer use unless there was speedy and large scale plant expansion of the steel industry. But the big steel companies were well represented by Gano Dunn, the expert chosen by the President to report to him directly on the vital steel situation. Dunn is president of the J. G. White Engineering Co. which has done exceedingly well with government construction and engineering contracts. It will also be recalled that Dunn was one of Wendell Willkie's principal assistants in his fight against the TVA. Last winter the OPM was being deluged with reports from its own economists to the effect that immediate steel expansion was necessary. But Dunn submitted a lengthy report to the President on Feb. 28, 1941, in which he pooh-poohed these estimates. He declared that there would be plenty of steel. As a matter of fact, he said that in 1941 there would be a surplus of more than 10,000,000 tons.

TWO MONTHS LATER Dunn found it necessary to issue a new report which was in effect an elaborate apology for the anti-expansion crowd in the steel industry and for his earlier report. The situation had changed, he said. Although the whole country was talking about the impending passage of the lend-lease bill on February 28, Dunn claimed he did not realize it was in prospect. Dunn did admit, however, that his optimistic forecast of surpluses was wide of the margin. There would be a shortage, he said, of 1.4 million tons in '41, and of 6.4 million in '42. But even this estimate of shortages was based on some remarkable juggling of figures. He cut down considerably the estimate of consumer needs for steel which was furnished him by the OPM Bureau of Research. Then he engaged in some more manipulation. He took the reduced estimate of the OPM economists, added it to the still lower estimate submitted by the American Iron and Steel Institute, and divided by two. The President's steel expert, in other words, split the difference. On the basis of the figures prepared by the OPM economists the real shortage of steel in 1942 will be 22.9 million tons.

This steel shortage will be felt completely in consumer goods. It is generally conceded that there is steel enough for all military purposes, unlike the case of aluminum where the shortage will be felt in military production too. And so nobody seemed to care particularly. Unemployed workers in auto and dozens of consumer good industries which need steel will be the only casualties. The President put the stamp of his approval on both Dunn reports. Within the next two years severe shortages in steel for consumer goods are almost inevitable.

WHY have the big industrialists and their representatives followed a policy which means shortages? The reasons are obvious. Expansion, for one thing, is dangerous to monopoly. Expansion in the case of the aluminum industry might well have meant lower prices, and perhaps most serious of all to ALCOA, it might have meant new and vigorous competitors springing up in the field. Besides, big business as a whole feels that it can do better by diverting all of its attention to war production on the basis of guaranteed profits from the government and from the British. Then there is always the problem of what to do about idle plant capacity after the war is over. It is true that OPM has reduced this problem to a minimum. In many cases the government builds the plant for the companies at its own expense. In other cases the companies are permitted to write off the cost of the plant and reduce taxes. The government owns the titles to those plants which it builds entirely at its own expense, but if the companies involved don't want to use the new facilities they can virtually force the government to dismantle the new plant facilities. Nevertheless, expansion as a whole is by no means the most profitable course for monopoly capital and it has generally opposed this policy.

So they planned it that way. There will be shortages this year, and next. It is estimated by government economists that there will be perhaps a million workers thrown out of their jobs in consumer goods industries, affected particularly by the shortages in steel and aluminum. It is even possible that these displaced workers will be as numerous as those who may be given jobs by the boom in the armaments industry. Thus the total of the nation's unemployed may not be reduced at all from its present high level of about 9,000,000. "New Dealers" may grumble a little about the whole situation from time to time but there is not much they can do about it. The dollar-a-year boys are running this show.

ADAM LAPIN.

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CANADA'S DORISE NIELSEN

Herbert Biberman's interview with the only fearless leader of the Canadian people in Parliament. The woman from the farm. Why 1,500 unionists are in concentration camps.

CRISES do things to people. At a given point people turn around and do things to crises. One of the instruments the people use in acting upon crises is leadership. Leadership is a complex fruit. It must combine the manifold qualities of the people in delicate interweaving. It grows and matures slowly, but it grows and matures inexorably, everywhere. I learned that in Canada.

In Montreal I entered a belligerent country for the first time. Vast numbers of kids in uniform on the streets. Glum expressions on the faces of the people. Billboards of red decorated with a cocky gold lion dancing above the legend: "We are all in the front lines, *this time.*" His Majesty The King. I discovered that Canada is more than a belligerent country. It is rapidly becoming a fascist country. What is important in this observation is that you cannot tell it is becoming fascist by looking at it. The street cars run on time. The shops are open for business if you have the money. You cannot see fascism coming, visually. It affects various strata of the people at different times. Perhaps the mind rather than the eyes, perhaps the belly and the mind rather than the eyes, divine its approach.

In Montreal I learned of Wendell Willkie's recent visit. After weeks of an all-out publicity campaign 12,000 people were on hand to hear him. But only a week before, with practically no publicity, 9,000 people turned out to hear Dorise W. Nielsen, MP. From oblivion to the only fearless leader of the Canadian people in Parliament in less than a year. That sounded like swift ascent. But what of the years behind her?

I OBTAINED a copy of her speeches in Parliament in pamphlet form. Ten cents a copy. Pretty high. Yet within a few months of publication over 45,000 copies had been sold. That would correspond to a half million in the United States.

On the cover was a photograph of Mrs. Nielsen. You knew at once she was a tall woman, with head held high. A wide mouth and a strong nose. Her eyes were extremely soft. Easy to tears of feeling. But their special quality was belief. Not hope. More than hope. Belief. The pamphlet was titled "Demoracy Must Live." A quote on the cover read as follows: "Democracy is a living thing. If you seek to bind and chain democracy, if you seek to keep it for a while without letting it live, and without permitting it to exercise itself, democracy will wither; it will die."

In Montreal I learned that 1,500 trade unionists are in concentration camps. Many of them had been taken right out of negotiations with their employers and without trial or examination thrown into camps where they were not permitted any communication with the outside world, either by letter or person.

In Montreal I learned of one of the most cynical political tricks of the century. In Nova Scotia there had been a Ukrainian newspaper. It had a staff of nineteen. One day a military police escort with wagon descended upon the place and took all nineteen of the staff away. Then they dismantled the press and moved it down the street and gave it to another Ukrainian paper, a fascist one. The nineteen are still in the concentration camp.

In Montreal I learned of the deferred payment savings plan. All voluntary. Canada would not think of forcing anyone to buy its war bonds which come in denominations as low as twenty-five cents. The only result was, if you didn't buy what was thought by others to be your share, you were fired. But no compulsion. The bonds which pay interest quarterly had all been grabbed up by the banks. But that was fair. If they permitted the people to buy these latter bonds they would also share in the interest, which of course wasn't the idea. You wouldn't fight a war that way.

I sat down in my hotel room and turned the cover of the pamphlet. On the first page was a sub-title, obviously a quote. "The most subversive thing in Canada is poverty. I shall never forget that." I decided to leave for Ottawa, Canada's capital, at once.

That night on the train I read Dorise Nielsen's pamphlet from cover to cover, half a dozen times. It was something more than just good speaking, or even good politics. It was political literature. It was poured out of the people in whose behalf it spoke. It was deeply and simply poetic. "In the past the western pioneers went out to carve themselves homes out of the wilderness; today that spirit is leading them to carve a little justice out of this government. . . . We have lost our political liberty through the Defense of Canada Regulations, and now in the proposed budget we face social and economic disaster."

Dorise Nielsen, MP

Ottawa is a city of statues. On my way to the Houses of Parliament I stopped and read the legend upon many of the statues I passed. "To our brave boys who died in China." "To our brave boys who died in South Africa." "To our brave boys who died in France." To the brave boys who died in every country of the world except Canada, and in Canada they are starving. The nightmarish character of imperialism, which sends Canadian boys to die in every part of the world was written over the face of that city.

IN THE Houses of Parliament there is a throne. When a bill is about to pass, a uniformed lackey comes forward, takes a great gold scepter from hooks under the table, and puts it on hooks above the table. Then he bows to the empty throne. The speaker then moves toward the throne, hat on head, or off head, and bows to it. (Forgive inaccuracy but the royal routine was too complex for my simple democratic eyes.) Then he sits in it. Then he stands. Then he removes his hat and gives it to a page boy. Then he reads the bill. Then he takes his hat again and places it upon his head. Then he bows and then he descends. Then the uniformed lackey takes the great scepter from the hooks on the table and places it on hooks under the table. This is actually done by full grown men, seriously. What the Marx brothers couldn't do with the Canadian Parliament, if they had a mind to.

I looked about the great hall and just below me I saw her. She was even taller than I had thought and more gaunt. Only thirty-eight years old. But the last years had been brutalizing ones. The only woman in the house. As I looked at her listening intently to the debate, I thought of the day, only a year ago when she had entered this chamber. She had come from the west of Canada. She had dressed herself in the best cotton wrapper she had been able to lay hands on. It was of shoddy stuff and worn. It didn't fit too well. When she walked into this august assemblage the house broke out in roars of laughter. What a joke she was to these gentlemen. This farm woman. How dared she intrude upon the well groomed presence of these men of position, endangering the sartorial traditions of empire.

She rose to speak. Her maiden speech. "Mr. Speaker, in rising for the first time to

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speak . . . I find myself in the unique position of being the only woman member of this house. It is a sad reflection upon us as a nation when, while over fifty percent of our voters are women, we can have only one representative of our sex in this house . . . we have at last the courage to search our own hearts and to find there that we have ideas and ideals peculiar to ourselves. To fail to give expression to these ideas is to deny our womanhood."

". . . today the one great question of war overshadows everything else. . . . I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, what have women to do with death? Our purpose in the world is to give life and to protect it. . . . Through these last two years great calamities have reduced the people of the west, some of whom I have the honor to represent in this House, to the point of destitution. I am not an advocate of relief . . . yet, if the basic problem of agriculture is not tackled by this House . . . the relief must be continued and it must be increased if the people of the west are to survive. I feel myself very much qualified to speak upon this question of relief, because for three years I have lived upon relief. I had to feed a family of five—listen carefully—upon $11.25 a month."

Mrs. Nielsen continued. "I would say to you, my friends—and I call you my friends because I cannot believe that honorable members on the government benches are men of stone; you are men of flesh and blood; you are made of the same texture as these people who are struggling in the west to earn themselves a livelihoood. I cannot believe that you have not in your hearts that human compassion for your fellow men in times of distress . . . I would say that the time to consider the life of the people of Canada is not when the war is finished but now. Life must be protected now in this country . . . In this time of crisis I feel that as a woman and particularly as the only woman in this House, even though mine is the only voice raised—and I sincerely hope it will not be—yet I must raise it in defense of, and for the protection of life, the life of the Canadian people, because the people of Canada must have life and they must have it more abundantly." The members weren't laughing any longer.

How did this woman come to be in the Parliament? How did she come to be on relief immediately preceding her election? Who is she? Dorise W. Nielsen was born in London, England. Her father was a working man who voted Conservative. Ten years ago, after school in England, she came to Canada as a schoolteacher. She finally located in a little town in western Canada among the farmers. After teaching school for one year, she met and married a young farmer born in Quebec of Danish parents. He had fought in the first world war and then came west to make a living on new land which he cleared himself and upon which he had built a small shack.

Eight years later, this woman who had lived in London, the world's largest city, all her life, stood beside her husband and their three children, as depression and drought ravaged all the farmers. This woman who had voted Conservative all her life had to accept relief. Then she had to fight for it, side by side with people, distraught like herself. First, she thought the fault was their own. They had just not done what they should have done. But she could not discover what their failings had been. In desperation she turned to the progressive movements. She turned to them because hunger demanded that she turn from both Liberal and Conservative Parties which had proved they held no hope for her or her family.

When the Canadian Cooperative Commonwealth Federation was formed, she joined it. Within a short period she became one of the organizers of this movement. She had education, a memory of the English theory of the right of the individual to a decent life. But she wished to do more than speak and hope. She wished for positive gains. When it became apparent that the long entrenched Liberal member could only be defeated by a coalition of all parties, she declared for a Unity Platform. She was expelled from the Cooperative Commonwealth, whose leadership is of the sort that now governs the British Labor party. She rallied the various dissident groups and a convention was called. Here she met hungry people with militant devotion to their common needs. At this convention she was elected as the Unity candidate over two men who were nominated with her.

The situation looked hopeless. No money. No publicity. No organization. The area of the riding for which she was about to stand was the largest in Canada. Winter was coming on. The constituency was one of the most complex in all of Canada. French Canadians, Ukrainians, German Mennonites, German Catholics, Hungarians, Russians, Poles, as well as Anglo-Saxons. And to top all the difficulties, the candidate was a woman. As she threw herself into the campaign, the Liberal candidate grew worried.

One evening a Liberal lawyer arrived in this little town by snow plane. He brought with him eviction papers against the Nielsens. The point was pretty obvious. If she insisted upon running she would be evicted. At that moment she knew herself as never before in her life. She told him she would not leave her announced candidacy and that she would also not leave her land. There was a law in Saskatchewan to prevent people from being evicted if the land on which their home stood became possessible by the mortgagee. The news of this political intimidation spread around the riding by word of mouth. The case went to the Saskatchewan legislature. In all the little communities people talked of this woman who had refused to break down, and who was running despite all the Liberals, their snow planes, and their damned eviction notices.

People who had never voted anything but Liberal supported her. For the first time in the riding's history the French Canadians voted against the Liberal Party. The cost of her campaign was $741.68. It was collected in pennies, nickels, and dimes from the little meetings she addressed in whatever towns she could reach on what had been collected in the previous towns. It was because of this background she could say in her address in Parliament, "As long as people are living in poverty, Canada is not a great nation. I shall never forget why I was sent here and whom I represent."

INTO THE OFFICE of this legendary character, about whom I had learned all this within twenty-four hours, I walked at the tail end of a delegation of some twenty women, who were entering as I reached her office. We had just about closed the door behind us when she came in. I am not afraid to talk about her eyes in the most ancient manner. They were pools of light. Light blue and soft and watery, and brilliant with calm belief. Because another male, a young boy was with the women, I was accepted as part of the delegation. I stood in the rear of the room and listened, for I could not press forward to introduce myself, nor could I speak to introduce myself. The air was too charged. These were wives and daughters and a son of trade unionists in concentration camps. They had come to speak to the committee on the Defense of Canada Regulations to ask that a grave injustice be corrected. Although Mrs. Nielsen was not their immediate representative, they addressed themselves to her. Mrs. Nielsen belonged not to her constituency, but to all the common people of Canada.

The men of these women had been classed as "enemy aliens." They wished their category changed to what they were, Canadian political prisoners. For then they should be permitted the right to receive mail and food, etc. As the young boy put it, "My father is not an enemy alien. He is a loyal Canadian, loyal to the welfare of the Canadian people. If there is anything alien here, it is the regulation which labels him that."

These women and the boy were from every part of Canada. They had found each other by correspondence and had determined to come to the capitol together to plead for their men.

Mrs. Nielsen, not being a member of the committee on Defense of Canada Regulations, had invited two "Liberal" committee members to talk with the delegation. They came in. For an hour they explained the laws to this delegation. They explained rotten laws with such understanding that they almost made them seem like good laws. It's a pretty old liberal trick. And besides, it was too bad this delegation had come without first having written the committee and sent in a brief of their complaint. That was the procedure. And you could understand why there had to be procedure. Of course it was too bad, because they obviously couldn't stay around for two weeks or so, and of course it would be pretty difficult for them to go home and come back, especially since some of them had come over a thousand miles. But the history of the tradition of the procedure

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was very interesting. And especially the reason why one must send both a full statement of the case and a brief as well. Oh, and there were other interesting impediments. . . . Mrs. Nielsen asked that, since the delegation was here, the committee make special rules and hear these citizens. Not only were their men gone, but their relief had been taken away and their ability to make a living was jeopardized. Then these two men began to explain the rules again until I wanted to burst out of my anonymity and scream to them that the rules could be damned for ten minutes while they rose in committee and raised hell about them and even raised hell about them on the floor of the House. But the women and the boy had more control. They were not at all surprised at the callousness of the House or the longwindedness of its Liberals.

FINALLY I was alone with Mrs. Nielsen. She was modest, in the way only those individuals can be who are merged with their base. It was not easy for her. I could sense that many times her loneliness in this great House, the feeling of being so hopelessly outnumbered, and her constant concern for the welfare of the people who had sent her here and for whom she was able to do so little, must gather together and overpower her. But in any moments of weakness she thought back to those she represented. "The farmers of the west are wonderful people; they have virility and vitality in the highest degree, yet today you find them despondent and hopeless, fearing to look into the future because they dread the years ahead." This she said to the Parliament. And in this was one side of the truth. But the truth and the people have more than one aspect. There comes the moment when they begin to act upon the crisis. So on New Year's, she addressed an open letter to the people of Canada. "I am writing to you, the Canadian people, because it is the only way I can reach you." This letter she mailed to tens of thousands of Canadians all over the country. "I feel that if you know the truth you will lift your voice in protest, especially against the injustice of the war budget. Mine is only one voice, but yours is the voice of millions. Our government is acting the Charlie McCarthy to the big-business Bergen; it is protecting the wealthy at the expense of the nation. . . . To all of you then, who stand on the hill and look toward the future as I do, with hope and assurance, I propose a people's movement, a people's movement to bind together all those who have given of their labor both by hand and brain to build Canada. If Canadians want a people's movement then they must themselves proclaim a platform. As one of you I offer the following suggestions as to the general principles it should contain." Then follows a ten-point program for trade union and farmers' rights, for relief and against profiteering, for vast extensions of democracy, including release of all interned trade unionists and anti-fascists, and for collaboration with the common people of all countries to end exploitation and war.

"Oscar thinks we ought to send Bundles to California now that the AEF is there."

Then she continues. "We have the courage of our ancestors—those men who through struggle won for us the liberties we enjoy today. Over one hundred years ago William Lyon Mackenzie and Louis Joseph Papineau dared to stand against the reactionary forces of their day, and by courage and determination won representative government for the people of Canada. They too were branded as traitors, were ousted from the office to which they were elected by the people. Papineau was excommunicated by the church, and Mackenzie driven to seek refuge in the United States. Lount and Matthews were hanged for their part in the struggle for freedom. That was a hundred years ago, but today those men are honored as the true founders of Canadian democracy. Let us then dare much to carry forward the cause of the common people and to build a happier, a more prosperous, and a truly united Canada."

I asked Mrs. Nielsen what she thought of continental unity. She laughed. Then those wonderful eyes began to shine. "I love and believe in unity. In towns, provinces, and among nations. But I believe it must rise out of the earth and the men who till it, out of the mines and the men who uproot its treasures, and out of the people of good will. Then we will have a unity of humanity which will profit all. That we must have and that we will have. There is another kind of unity, which negates the people. It's the kind we have now. That kind must go. It's good to feel that the unity of the common people is raising its single programmatic head all over America. It could not be otherwise. The unity of the people is inherent in the people everywhere."

Crises do things to people. At a given point people turn and do things to crises. One of the instruments the people use in acting upon crises is leadership. Leadership is a complex fruit. It must combine the manifold qualities of the people in delicate interweaving. It grows and matures slowly, but it grows and matures inexorably, everywhere. I learned that in Canada. I learned that from Dorise Nielsen. HERBERT BIBERMAN.

History in the Making

IN A free verse "poem" belaboring the American people for their stubborn addiction to such vices as peace and a decent standard of living, Dorothy Thompson describes Alexander Hamilton affectionately as "The handsome, fiery boy who led a ragged army with the works of Plato in his pocket, and Adam Smith, and John Stuart Mill." Plato is a safe guess. One might argue the point about Adam Smith, since his *Wealth of Nations* was published in England the same year as the War of Independence began and it would have been rather difficult for Hamilton to import a copy and put it in his pocket. But that he managed to carry the works of John Stuart Mill around with him during the war is an unprecedented feat in view of the fact that Mill was not born till twenty-five years after the Battle of Yorktown and two years after Hamilton's death. La Thompson's notions of the past are evidently as foggy as her ideas on the present.

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MR. HULL MAKES A WISH

What the Secretary of State conveniently forgot when he talked about "open trade" after the war. Corliss Lamont discusses the only kind of world in which peaceful economic relations can thrive.

SECRETARY of State Cordell Hull, in his recent address celebrating Foreign Trade Week, called for the defeat of the Axis powers in order to guarantee "a system of open trade" and the sort of post war world in which "extreme nationalism" will "not again be permitted to express itself in excessive trade restrictions." "Unhappily," said Mr. Hull, "shortly after the close of the World War, power fell into the hands of groups which advocated political and economic nationalism in their most extreme forms."

What Secretary Hull for some reason neglected to add was that one of these groups was the Republican Party of the United States which in the Fordney-McCumber act put into effect, four years after the first world war, the highest tariff that up to then had been known in the history of this country. Had Mr. Hull pursued further the obvious implications of his speech, he would have had to say that it was almost as important for the establishment of free trade to defeat permanently the *American Republicans* as the *German Nazis*. And if he had gone on with the story, he would have been compelled to ask, too, for the defeat of the *Democratic* Party's high-tariff wing, which in the years to come has a good chance of regaining control.

Like many other capitalist interventionists these days, Secretary Hull in his address played down the cant about democracy, which scarcely anyone swallows any more, and tried to scare the American people into a shooting frame of mind by conjuring up the terrible *economic* effects of an Axis victory. As a matter of fact the economic consequences of an Axis victory *will* be terrible for both Europe and the world at large; but so will the economic consequences of an Anglo-American victory or of a stalemate or of whatever military outcome of the imperialist war can be imagined. For the extreme political and economic nationalism that Cordell Hull quite rightly decries is inherent in capitalism as such, both in its fascist and non-fascist forms, and is simply the expression on the international scene of the competitive, devil-take-the-hindmost, economic individualism which is the motive power of the capitalist order in domestic affairs.

Hitler and his Nazis have been responsible for a multitude of evils since they came to power in 1933, but they were not responsible, as Secretary Hull seems to imply, for the breakdown in international trade that went hand in hand with the Great Depression starting in 1929. That breakdown was the immediate result of the increasingly critical economic situation throughout the entire capitalist world, with the monetary systems of the different capitalist nations going through the most profound vicissitudes and with tariffs growing into virtual embargoes. Even England, the great and traditional free-trade country, finally succumbed during this period to the pressure of economic self-defense and enacted far reaching tariff laws.

This trade debacle was in part the natural culmination of a whole century of protective tariff legislation on the part of most capitalist nations, both large and small. And in more recent times the great power which set the worst example and enacted many of the highest tariffs was our own USA. If any one of the fascist countries is able to deal as heavy blows to world free trade as did America during the first three decades of the twentieth century, it will be going some!

IN HIS SPEECH Mr. Hull mentioned other desirable post-war aims besides that of free trade. "Raw material supplies," he insisted, "must be available to all nations without discrimination." There must be international agreements that properly regulate the supply of commodities to all peoples and international financial arrangements that "lend aid to the essential enterprises and continuous development of all countries." Referring to the ruthless methods of the Axis powers, the Secretary declared: "The economic structure of the enslaved country is forcibly reshaped and systematically subordinated to the economy of the ruling or conquering country." Such cold-blooded trampling upon national and human rights, he asserted, cannot be permitted.

To all of which I say a devout "Amen." But it is necessary to remind the Secretary of State that his description of Axis methods also happens to be an excellent description of the imperialist exploitation of colonies carried on, long before the advent of the fascists, by the various capitalist empires of Great Britain, France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, and Hohenzollern Germany. What has finally aroused Mr. Hull to indignation is that the Nazi barbarians are now doing to some of the white peoples of Europe what the ruling classes of Europe in general did and still are doing to black, yellow, and brown peoples all over the world.

The truth is, of course, that the evils which

Secretary Hull denounces are part and parcel of the international system of imperialism. To claim that smashing the Axis will get rid of them is either wishful thinking of the most naive variety or something worse. And the striking paradox here is that only socialism, which Mr. Hull and his fellow liberals fear and oppose, can ever fulfill their typically liberal ideals of free trade, an equitable allocation of raw materials, international financial stability, and world peace.

Socialism will eliminate the fundamental causes of war, which are economic, by eliminating the capitalist evils of depression and unemployment, cut-throat competition in international trade, and private profits from armaments and Armageddon. Public ownership of the instrumentalities of production and distribution means that no individuals or groups can make money from manufacturing munitions or selling any other goods needed in armed hostilities. And democratic socialist planning, by establishing a just and rational economic system at home, will make it unnecessary for governments to attempt to extricate themselves from internal difficulties by undertaking adventures abroad.

Because their own people will always have sufficient purchasing power to buy back what is produced domestically, socialist nations will feel no economic pressure driving them on to get rid of surplus goods in the foreign market or to compete with other countries in the violent acquisition of colonies, protectorates, and spheres of influence. Likewise, since in the socialist economies there will be a planned investment of capital and since there will always be plenty of opportunities for it on the domestic scene, there will no be compelling need to send capital abroad for investment.

Most important of all in the international sphere, cooperative economic planning will take place between the different socialist states. Thus no national unit will have to fear that it may be cut off from essential sources of raw materials or that it will lose out in some disastrous currency war. This international socialist planning, in conjunction with the disappearance of special capitalist interests lobbying for protection in the various countries, will also lead to the abolition of tariffs, except perhaps for the minor purpose of raising revenue in convenient fashion. The natural exchange of goods will accordingly increase on a vast scale and all the advantages for which free-traders have been agitating since the time of Adam Smith will be actualized.

Socialism, then, as it unfolds internationally, puts a finish once and for all to the fierce struggle, with the entire planet as the arena, among the capitalist imperialisms, minor and major, to survive and expand at the expense of one another and of exploited

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peoples. It forever liberates the colonial and semi-colonial countries, in which dwell now at least half the population of the earth, from the heavy bonds of imperialist lordship and control. And so, by establishing true international democracy, with all nations living on terms of equality, freedom, and friendship socialism brings into being that great and peaceful world society which has become such an acute necessity for our age.

Socialist international planning will emerge as an effective and functioning thing long before every nation has adopted socialism. Indeed, already in the Soviet Union we find a social economic planning system operating successfully over a territory far larger than the United States and non-Russian Europe combined and drawing together in one immense collective enterprise sixteen different republics and more than 150 different minority peoples.

One can illustrate concretely how socialist international planning might spread, by imagining either England or Germany, or both, becoming socialist commonwealths within the next five or ten years. In the latter eventuality they could immediately start to cooperate closely with the existing Soviet planning system. England and Germany, both of which lack foodstuffs and raw materials, would receive a proper proportion of these from the resources of the present USSR in exchange for machinery and consumers' goods. And these two new socialist units would proceed to function on behalf of the production and distribution of abundance for a vastly enlarged planning area.

The final result, when socialist planning is in effect over a sufficient proportion of the earth, will be Twenty-Year *World* Plans that will immeasurably raise the living standards, both material and cultural, of all humanity and that will sweep unemployment, depression, war, and poverty off the face of the globe. This will entail, besides National Planning Commissions in each socialist country, an International Planning Commission, with headquarters at Geneva or some other appropriate city, functioning on behalf of the United Socialist States of the World. There will also be Continental Planning Commissions for North America, South America, Asia, Africa, and Australia; and, wherever necessary, sub-divisions of these covering several countries.

Though socialism is frankly and unyieldingly international in its scope and aims, its adherents at the same time remain national patriots in the best sense of the word. They are loyal to all the finest traditions of their own countries; they take pride in and encourage the peaceful flowering of national cultures; but they are absolutely opposed to every form of national and racial chauvinism. And they see no more reason why an integrated international commonwealth should prevent the expression of the spirit and genius native to the various nationalities than why a closely knit nationalism should do away with the characteristic contributions of city, state, or region.

CLEARLY socialism stands as the greatest hope for those ideals of international peace and understanding which have been both an inspiration and a goal for countless men and women of good will in all ages. The ideal of human brotherhood throughout the earth, regardless of race, nationality or religion, is one of the oldest in the history of thought. In every ethical philosophy worthy of the name, from the ancient Greeks and early Christians to the twentieth century, this ideal has had in some form or other a rightfully important place. And though this conception of human fraternity has often been scorned as sentimental, today even the most tough-minded realist must agree that modern civilization can hardly be saved without it.

Precisely during these times of capitalist nationalism gone mad in its world-wide orgy of hate, war, and slaughter does it behoove radicals to re-affirm their international ideals and to make plain that for socialism there can be no lesser ethical aim than the happiness, freedom, and progress of all humanity. And it is essential, too, for us to show that *only* socialism and international socialist planning can achieve this end, that the shiny hopes held out to the American people by interventionist spokesmen like Secretary Hull and other administration apologists are utterly specious, that the peoples of the earth can break through capitalism's vicious circle of economic catastrophe and catastrophic war by abolishing the present profit system and in no other way.

CORLISS LAMONT.

Letter

I hope he doesn't see me walking past his bed
but if he does, I'll make believe
I didn't hear him if he calls.

Young man, a minute please.
I can't get out of it I guess.
I don't mind the time, it's just the smell
of old age and rotting flesh I hate.

I want to talk to you.
He'll tell me what a mighty man he was.
I'll bet he's pressed a million pants,
and even was a Socialist
before his kidneys took up all his time.

Come closer please, I want to ask you
if you have some time to spare.
if you have some time to spare.
I've got the time all right
but not enough to sing, to love, to go away
and never see that ugly face again.

To write for me a letter to my wife.
Was she tall was she short was she fat
was she thin when it mattered what she was?
Are there any more home like him?

And tell her this, but say it in your own words;
Never in my own words
I've got a sacred language
that she wouldn't understand.

Dear Rose:
Tonight I feel so bad I want to die.
That's not the way I feel tonight,
Dear Jane: That's not the way I feel at all.
Dear God that's not the way
Please try to come and don't be mad no more.
I didn't see you now a long time.
In my own words, if she remembers
anything that wasn't groaning, slobbering,
unclean, she'd never come.

And bring the boy. I want to talk to you before I die.
What can the old man have to say
that must be said, to them, to me
or anyone alive? What?

Love,
Abraham

ALEXANDER BERGMAN.

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Battle for Syria

THE epilogue of Anthony Eden's speech expressing "great sympathy with Syrian aspirations for independence" is — the British invasion of Syria. It marks the opening of the battle for control of the Near East. We have remarked on other occasions that nowhere is this war so clearly revealed in all its imperialist nakedness as in those areas in which it impinges on the colonial and semi-colonial world. The question in Syria was whose invasion would come first, the German or the British. Except for Eden's hypocritical bid for the support of the Arab peoples, no official person in England bothered even to give lip-service to the idea that Britain in the Near East was acting to free subject nations. That argument would have sounded particularly hollow in view of the recent British attack on Iraq. And our own Secretary of State Hull, who has dedicated himself so loftily to combating aggression everywhere, takes cognizance of the British invasion of Syria by rebuking—the French. What none of these spokesmen for imperialism acknowledges, but what will ultimately have to be reckoned with is that Syria has a powerful native independence movement which has given the French masters of that country many headaches; this movement is hardly likely to fancy foreign oppression in any form, French, British, or German.

The struggle in Syria, too, brings to a focus many of the distorted values and tragic indecencies of this war. Britain and France, former allies, tear at each others' throats; Frenchmen are hurled against Frenchmen, colonial troops from India against Syrian colonial troops. For what purpose? That British bankers and industrialists, instead of German bankers and industrialists, may loot the Near East and control this ancient gateway to the greater loot of Asia.

The British are advancing in Syria and Lebanon from three main directions: from Palestine, up the Mediterranean coast toward Beirut; farther inland, from Trans-Jordan, toward Damascus; and up the Euphrates from Iraq. Just how many troops the British are using is not clear; they are being assisted by an undetermined number from the "Free French" forces under General Catroux. British reports in the first days of the fighting sought to give the impression that little resistance was being encountered, while French reports from Vichy maintained that their forces were contending every inch of soil. From the fact that in the first thirty-six hours, British mechanized troops driving along the coast toward Beirut had progressed only twenty or twenty-five miles, it would seem that the British are meeting greater opposition than they would like to admit. As we go to press, there have been no reports of action by German troops despite the fact that prior to the invasion, British propaganda pictured steady German infiltration via Turkey and the eastern Mediterranean, and by transport planes. It is possible that the Germans are not yet prepared, either militarily or diplomatically, for full-scale action. As was the case in Libya, they may find it necessary to permit the British to occupy Syria temporarily and count on driving them out when they are ready to launch an offensive. Meanwhile French resistance serves the two-fold purpose for the Nazis of dissipating British strength and revealing France's weakness, thus increasing the latter's dependence on Germany.

Anti-Semitism in Congress

SUDDEN death in the House of Representatives last week highlighted one of America's most tragic problems: the growth of anti-Semitism. Rep. Michael Edelstein of New York suffered a fatal heart attack after replying to a vehement anti-Semitic outburst by Representative Rankin of Mississippi. The gentleman from the poll-tax South had indulged in Coughlin's gibbering about "international Jewish brethren" whom he held responsible for the war in Europe. This is by no means the first such anti-Semitic ranting on the floor of the US Congress—Representative Edelstein's answer, which brought on his death, was in reply not only to Rankin but to expressions of racial prejudice which he had heard since he entered Congress last year. These expressions have only grown more frequent since the outbreak of war.

Some of the press has tried to make Edelstein a democratic martyr, and Rankin a symbol of forces that oppose war. This, of course, contradicts truth. Anti-Semitism has been spread by both war camps, by the Coughlinites and Fords and by the Rooseveltians. The administration releases the Christian Fronters who cached arms stolen from the government; it furthers anti-alien drives which follow the Hitler technique; its "defense" industries discriminate against Jews as well as Negroes. And it is allied with a British government which coddles anti-Semitic Polish colonels in London. Edelstein was a loyal follower of this administration. So, indeed, was Rankin, who pretends to oppose war but voted for most administration war measures, including the Lend-Lease Act.

Preacher of Violence

"NOW *if your dog had rabies you wouldn't clap him into jail after he had bitten a number of persons—you'd put a bullet into his head, if you had that kind of iron in your blood. It is going to require brutal treatment to handle these teachers. . . . We cannot live with them nor they with us.*"

This bit of Hitlerism didn't come out of the Third Reich—not directly, anyway. It is from a recent public speech by Sen. Frederic Coudert, Jr., of Rapp-Coudert notoriety. His words represent the considered opinion of a man who has managed to get twenty-eight of New York's most progressive teachers suspended and three dismissed for "subversive" deeds—such as union activity. This state senator, who calls for bullets and brutal treatment, victimizes progressives under cover of fighting "force and violence." In a protest to Governor Lehman and Assembly leaders, the Conference for Inalienable Rights points out that, under the New York State Penal Law, persons who justify assassination of or assault upon public employees are guilty of criminal anarchy. The senator's call to violence should, at the very least, disqualify him for holding public office any longer.

It is on the basis of this self-righteous fascist's inquisition that the hierarchy of the American Federation of Teachers is attempting to cripple, if not kill, their own union. Their idea is to get rid of the three most progressive locals: two in New York (Locals 5 and 537) and one in Philadelphia, Local 192. Several days ago the Red-baiting AFT leadership, with the assistance of Coudert propaganda and an abusive press, conducted a "referendum" on the expulsion of these locals. Even then the vote to expel was close with some 3,000 ballots—enough to swing the vote the other way—declared invalid on technical grounds. However, the three locals have not been expelled. According to the union's constitution, expulsion is possible only through a two-thirds vote of the national convention. When the convention meets in August delegates from these locals—which make up over twenty-five percent of the AFT membership—will fight the issue out on the floor.

A more immediate battle for free education is scheduled to begin in New York City on Monday, June 16, when Morris U. Schappes faces trial on Rapp-Coudert charges of "perjury." The indictment against him, if successfully prosecuted, may lead to a twenty-year sentence and $20,000 fine. Demands that this indictment be dismissed should be sent to District Atty. Thomas E. Dewey, New York City.

The Vatican's "New Order"

PIUS XII's recent statement on social problems offers poor comfort or guidance to the Catholic people. Commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the famous encyclical, *Rerum Novarum,* it is a logical sequel to that pronouncement of Leo XIII's. *Rerum Novarum* was issued in 1891 to stem the growing forces of socialism. While dwelling on the dignity

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of labor and its right to a "just" share of the world's material goods, the encyclical put forth a conception of labor unions whose predominant feature was cooperation with employers. In 1941 Pope Pius XII speaks of "free organizations" of labor, but attributes to employers equally with workers the "duty and right to organize the labor of the people . . ." and assigns to the state the duty of actively interfering with labor organization to prevent "dislocations of economic balance arising from plurality and divergence of clashing interests, individual and collective."

This sanction of corporate-state control over labor is matched by the Pope's sanction of private property—which is also a reiteration of principles enunciated in *Rerum Novarum* and other Vatican pronouncements. Neither sanction is actually modified by declaring that the state's interference should be such as to "safeguard labor's personal rights" or that the property should be utilized for "the common good." We do not need today's headlines to tell us that capitalism, which rests upon private property, forbids any such happy outcome of its ruling authority. Similarly, the Pope's demand for "vital space," the opening of unoccupied territories to overcrowded populations would be extremely unrealistic even in times of "peaceful" capitalist aggression.

Some leading non-labor papers have described Pius XII's statement as envisaging a "new order" that satisfies many fascist aspirations but insists upon the liberty of the individual. It would be more accurate to say that it furthers a fascist "new order" to which all capitalist governments are inevitably tending in this time of crisis—and protests only such state encroachment as imperils the Church's power. By its stubborn resistance to the needs and strength of the people—which includes the masses of Catholic people—the Vatican is inviting upon them the savage degradation which has befallen the Catholic peoples of lands already under Nazi or fascist control.

What Washington Fears

AMBASSADOR WINANT did not drop on America by parachute; and on his arrival he did not ask the way to Colonel Lindbergh's home. Yet behind his sudden trip from London to Washington were the same fundamental compulsions that brought Rudolph Hess on his informal visit to the Duke of Hamilton. On both sides the war is teetering on a knife edge of uncertainty. That knife edge cuts deep into imperialism's dilemma: how to wage war without reaping self-destruction; how to make peace without precipitating disaster; how, in short, to keep going a system that must live by war—and is in danger of dying by it.

A crucial turning point has been reached. German imperialism, despite victory after victory, or because of it, is approaching a situation of diminishing returns and mounting peril. An arrangement with Britain—on terms favorable to Germany, of course—has become urgent if full American intervention is to be prevented and the social consequences of a long, exhausting war are to be averted. How pressing the issue of "peace" has become for Germany is indicated by the Hess flight; whether or not it was made with the agreement of Hitler, the trip of the Number Three Nazi undoubtedly expresses a powerful current of German ruling class opinion. And it would never have been undertaken had the Germans not had reason to believe that influential sections of the British ruling class would be receptive to such an offer. Churchill's silence, after promising a full and frank discussion of the Hess case, only deepens these suspicions. And President Roosevelt, not to be outdone at playing them close to the chest, breathes defiance against the Axis one night, and the next day denies that the acts implicit in his words are being contemplated.

With the policies of the warring governments in this state of flux, anything may happen: the sending of American troops to seize Dakar, the Azores, and the Cape Verde Islands; a deal between Britain and Germany; the outbreak of "shooting war" in the Atlantic; a Far Eastern Munich. The only certainty is that the peoples of the belligerent and quasi-belligerent countries are being kept completely in the dark, that behind their backs the masters of the imperialist world in Berlin, Washington, and London are seeking solutions which, whether they take the form of continued war or a treacherous, unreal peace, will further the interests solely of a tiny minority of wealthy men. The haggling today is not over war or peace, but over the terms under which the world shall be plundered. And whatever these terms, the contending governments are determined that the rule of profit and privilege shall in all countries be fortified against the anger of the people, against the ascending power of socialist democracy and freedom that has forever wiped out imperialism over one-sixth of the earth.

The masters of our country are haunted by the fear that Britain will reach an agreement with Germany at the expense of their trade interests. To forestall this, the big business forces behind the America First Committee seek to come to terms with Germany at Britain's expense. That is the real meaning of the well-timed interview with Hitler of John Cudahy, former American ambassador to Belgium. The dominant monopolist groups, however, whose vehicle is the Roosevelt administration, favor preventing a British surrender by full military participation in the war before it is too late—even though they are worried by the possibility of a British double-cross. Why then does the President hesitate?

In our opinion, the principal reason why the President hesitates and delays the final plunge is that he knows that, despite the specious Gallup polls, the opposition of the American people to involvement in the war is today greater than ever. He knows it from the White House mail. He knows it from the mail that has been pouring in on Congress. A survey by the New York *Daily News*, made after the President's latest fireside chat, showed that the letters received by even such interventionist senators as Pepper, Wagner, Murray, Chandler, and Lucas are predominantly against convoys and war. The President also knows how strong is popular feeling on this question from the failure of his declaration of an unlimited emergency to produce the hoped-for "psychological" effect and from the refusal of workers in key industries to be browbeaten into surrendering their rights.

In this predicament Roosevelt is deliberately seeking some pretext to involve the United States. This is admitted with brazen cynicism by two of his journalistic satellites, Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, in their columns in the New York *Herald Tribune* of June 4 and 9. "The President," they write, "all his most important advisers, and the War and Navy Departments hope, however, that the patrol will produce an incident to serve as the pretext for really effective action by this country." Alsop and Kintner also report that recently an American destroyer actually attacked a German submarine.

What a commentary on those who speak in the name of the four freedoms, of democracy, who point the holier-than-thou finger at the pretexts Hitler has used for his acts of aggression while they themselves are devising similar pretexts! What a commentary on the whole system which these perjurers and subverters of everything decent, these plotters of death for millions represent! Choosing between them and their blood-brothers of the Lindbergh-General Wood stripe is like choosing between arsenic and cyanide. For the people there is a different choice. The National Maritime Union indicated that choice when it recently decided to petition the CIO to call a nationwide peace congress of trade unions and people's organizations. The NMU decision has already been endorsed by the Greater New York Council of the CIO, representing 400,000 organized workers, and by a number of individual unions. Significant beginnings of a people's peace movement already exist in the American Peace Mobilization. What has been lacking has been the initiative of the trade unions to serve as the attracting core for the common folk everywhere, including those who have been lured into the America First Committee. The people can put an end to the Roosevelt game of concocting "incidents" and cajoling America into a war to make American Hitlerism dominant here and abroad. They can put an end to the America First game of peace with Hitler for the sake of war against democracy at home. They can build a positive peace, a rich and meaningful life through their common effort, their united purpose, their abiding vision held high against the nightmare which the dreamers of empire offer mankind.

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APOLOGIA FOR WILSON

Another attempt at rescuing an architect of Versailles. Saintly myths about an imperialist politician. Theodore Draper reviews some scholarly whitewashing.

VERSAILLES TWENTY YEARS AFTER, *by Paul Birdsall. Reynal & Hitchcock. $3.*

PROFESSOR BIRDSALL of Williams College was bent chiefly on rescuing the reputation of Woodrow Wilson in relation to the Versailles treaty. He has written that kind of a book; it has a case to prove on every page. As an historian, however, Professor Birdsall is good enough to give himself away. His own conclusions from the evidence are singularly weak and unconvincing, while the real conclusions are implicit in the material he himself has drawn upon. He ends up by engaging in a mild flirtation with the new gospel of Union Now. A better inference from his own work is Union Never.

To begin with, there is the story of the Fourteen Points, which had much in common with the propaganda of Union Now, just as Franklin D. Roosevelt has much in common with Woodrow Wilson. The Fourteen Points helped the Allies at a critical moment. Germany was crumbling, but the Allies were so weak themselves that Foch dreaded every additional and unnecessary hour of fighting. Wilson's proposals induced the German government to ask for an armistice in order to get the best possible peace terms. But the French and British governments were hostile to the Wilsonian principles which were incompatible with their own "war aims," as expressed in the secret treaties. This was their dilemma: to accept the Fourteen Points and get the armistice, or to reject them and risk a continuation of the fighting.

Lloyd George and Clemenceau solved the problem by a characteristic bit of deception. After a little haggling, Lloyd George made two reservations to Wilson's proposals, which were not particularly important in themselves, but which opened the way for maneuvering in the future. In short, George accepted the Fourteen Points with the obvious intention of violating them in practice. Wilson was jubilant. He was also very hasty.

The Fourteen Points were useful for another reason. The armistice was signed on Nov. 11, 1918. But the peace treaty was not signed for another six months. This period was a very difficult one for the victorious Allies. To their own peoples the four years' war was a mockery and a ghastly failure, unless the peace which followed it was a vast improvement, perhaps a revolutionary improvement, on the world out of which came the war. The Fourteen Points were the answer to this deep and almost universal yearning. They were the promise of a better world. They were the wave of the future.

In the six months between the armistice and the peace the Allied armies had to be demobilized, the old jobbery of politics restored, the military economy discarded, and the profits of peace and victory substituted. The transition was enormously difficult and dangerous. The light of the Soviets was shining in the east, the Communist Parties were arising in the west. The masses of people had suffered so much that a little more suffering or merely struggle for a really new and better world was not likely to scare them off.

WOODROW WILSON was the decoy. Lloyd George and Clemenceau were no fools. They clearly perceived that an injection of the Wilsonian "idealism" was temporarily necessary to give themselves a breathing space in which to survive the period from the armistice to the peace. By the time the peace negotiations were finished, the worst stage of the Allied crisis was passed. The soldiers returned to the factories or to the streets. The political parties were back at their old stands with the same assortment of lies and half truths. This transition, the all important breathing space from the armistice to the peace, was accomplished under cover of the Fourteen Points.

Where there is a hero, there are villains. Professor Birdsall's are Lloyd George and Clemenceau. I am not sure which of these two he hates more, though I rather suspect it is Lloyd George. Clemenceau was brutal and candid, therefore an honorable enemy. Lloyd George was cunning, and there is a tendency to hiss whenever he makes an appearance. Professor Birdsall bitterly resents the utter ruthlessness with which Lloyd George violated the Fourteen Points whenever Great Britain's interests were at stake, and the ostentatious selflessness with which he defended the same principles whenever some other country's interests were involved.

But for this very reason Lloyd George and Wilson were frequently allies against the French and other delegations. In fact it may be asserted that Wilson was never able to gain a point unless he was supported by Lloyd George, so that the latter was really the holder of the balance of power and the chief architect of the peace treaty. This conclusion is irresistibly drawn from Professor Birdsall's evidence, but it cuts at the root of his own basic conclusion. About all that Professor Birdsall is able to claim after his examination of Wilson's struggle on each of the nine counts, is that the Versailles treaty would have been even worse if he had been absent. Yet this is the weakest defense of Wilson imaginable, and scarcely lives up to the preliminary claim that "Woodrow Wilson symbolized the forces of reason in the fight for a peace of justice." Professor Birdsall cannot plead his own case without refuting it.

FOR the Versailles treaty was a crime and a mistake. It might have been worse, as almost anything may be worse, but it was bad enough. In the end Woodrow Wilson accepted the Versailles treaty, and it is unnecessary to argue that he might have accepted a much worse one. The more important fact is that he might have accepted a much better one or none at all. Wilson preferred to sigh and relieve his conscience with the reflection that Clemenceau and Lloyd George were more to blame. But it should be remembered that Woodrow Wilson's heart was not broken by the Versailles treaty. It was broken by the Senate's refusal to ratify the treaty.

Anyway there is something typically Wilsonian about Professor Birdsall's plea that "the Treaty of Versailles would have been a worse treaty had Wilson remained in Washington." At best, this is the old liberal dodge about the lesser evil. Did Professor Birdsall consider the possibility that Wilson should be judged on the basis of something better, rather than something worse, than the Versailles treaty?

As a matter of fact, Wilson was far from a saint. He simply obeyed the rules of imperialist politics. The great test was the Shantung question and it exposed him completely. At the outbreak of the war, as a result of an extortion by force in 1898, Ger-

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many possessed extraterritorial privile[illegible] in the Shantung Peninsula. By a secret treaty Great Britain agreed to hand over the German privileges to Japan. In the same year, 1915, Japan forced on China the notorious Twenty-One Demands, in which the same concession was recognized. The Shantung question was one of the most outrageous at the peace negotiations. The Japanese demanded the German rights in the peninsula. The first and the last of the Fourteen Points should have made this impossible. The first was directed against secret diplomacy, and the last upheld the territorial integrity of great and small states alike. The Chinese delegation resisted strongly. The lines were drawn.

For a while Wilson wavered, but eventually he fell over on the Japanese side. His reasons were a revealing confession. "He felt constrained," Professor Birdsall writes, "to agree with Japan that China's declaration of war against Germany in 1917 could not invalidate Sino-Japanese treaties of 1915, and he warned Wellington Koo not to entertain the idea that 'there is injustice in arrangements based on treaties which Japan has entered into,' because 'unjust treatment of China in the past has been by no means confined to Japan.'" The Chinese knew that they were beaten under the rules of the "old diplomacy." They put their faith in Wilson as the father of the "new." They were disillusioned. Wilson supported Japan, in effect, because the Japanese were no worse than the others. But his conscience bothered him and he explained to Ray Stannard Baker: "He [Wilson] said the settlement was the best that could be had out of a dirty past."

PROFESSOR BIRDSALL remarks that Wilson's surrender was accounted for by "the legal and diplomatic strength of the Japanese claim." Is that satisfactory? Isn't this the very core of the problem which Wilson failed to meet on his own terms? The strength of the Japanese claim was based on the Twenty-One Points, which the Japanese themselves were forced later to relinquish, and on a secret treaty in which China was the innocent victim. To accept these claims was "legal and diplomatic." But it had nothing in common with the promised land of the Fourteen Points. It was "legal and diplomatic" in the old world of secret diplomacy and extortionate treaties. The Fourteen Points obliged Wilson, to this very modest extent at least, to break with that "dirty past." Instead he chose the futile and treacherous way of getting the "best" out of it.

The real moral of the story is not in the individual. It is in the class. Wilson was the head of a capitalist state, the most powerful in the world, and he played the imperialist game. At best he was a minority of one, even in the American delegation. The American colonial authority, George Louis Beer, thought that his chief was "sophomoric." Some of the others were even less charitable. On Professor Birdsall's own terms, the representatives of capitalism were incapable of a better peace

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than the Versailles treaty, though they were very near to a much worse one.

Actually Wilson and the others were complementary. His vast, empty, and bloodless promises were the substitute for any fundamental social change and helped to prevent one. When it came to dividing the spoils, Wilson himself was repeatedly false to his own principles. His concessions were always dependent on an alliance with the wiliest of his competitors. He made all sorts of shady deals for his League of Nations. He gave up the fight for a better future and accepted "the best that could be had out of a dirty past." To say that the best was not good enough, is to put it mildly.

THEODORE DRAPER.

Alaskan Idyll

ANOTHER MORNING, *by Wessel Smitter. Harper & Bros. $2.50.*

HAVING written his *Paradise Lost* in *F. O. B. Detroit,* Wessel Smitter has taken a stab at a *Paradise Regained.* The first novel described the destruction of a fine, strong personality by Mr. Ford's belt system, suggesting no more profound a solution than leaving Detroit, to set up as an independent clam digger. The new book finds its solution in the cooperative Matanuska Valley colony in Alaska.

What must be said for the author is that his feelings and instincts are right, that, however gropingly, he sees the fault where it lies, in the economic system, and the hope where it lies, in common ownership and social cooperation. What must also be said, however, is that his political thinking is hazy and superficial first and progressive second, and that his writing in this book is shoddy. His story deals with an incredible relief family named Williams, trustworthy-loyal-helpful-friendly-courteous-kind-etc., which gets a chance to go to Alaska as part of the government project for settling the Matanuska Valley with families who are to become self-supporting farmers. In Alaska they lose a child and get very hysterical about the cold and the dark, but the government establishes a cooperative for them, the capitalistic villain who wants to grow rich by producing more peas than the cooperative assigned him is foiled, and everything turns out all right. For local color you get a tragic romance between the Williams daughter and a two-timing snake who has a wife in the States, a number of grizzled old Alaskan characters with shreds of moose meat in their beards, and much small-boy humor about a sourdough landmark named Virgin Annie.

Stripped of all the hokum, the framework is basically sound. These families want the chance to live like human beings, and from their cooperative ownership and production they get it. But that's about as much as Smitter sees. He has not even the slightest concept of organization, and his cooperative is not so much a collective activity of working people as something the government hands them in a platinum chafing dish. He sees

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economics in terms of good guys and bad guys, and after the bad guys get it in the belly, something mystic called "another morning" breaks and everything is okay. The heroes of his system are all paternal members of the middle class: a kindly government manager, a doctor who is a cross between a saint and a psychiatrist, a *deus ex machina* relief worker; never the working people themselves.

BEN WILKES.

History on Its Head

LANDSCAPE OF FREEDOM: THE STORY OF PERSONAL LIBERTY IN AMERICA, *by Mauritz A. Hallgren. Howell, Soskin & Co. $3.50.*

BY CONSIDERING the problem of personal liberty as an independent narrative, with only the most general and cursory references to historical background and economic and political development, Mr. Hallgren arrives at a curious disproportion. In *Landscape of Freedom*, he is concerned with such matters as the freedom to drink, dress, and disport oneself according to one's own preferences, while labor's vicissitudes in organizing and the oppression of the Negro people seem to take second place in his mind.

By tearing events out of their social context, Mr. Hallgren puts the primary emphasis for men's actions on their subjective outlook rather than on the forces and conditions which mold their actions and thoughts. And once having overlooked the importance of social relationships, or rather implicitly denied their importance, Mr. Hallgren treats history as a series of unrelated happenings. In the same way, because he substantially denies the class nature of the struggles he recounts, their meaning becomes unfathomable, and in many cases is actually distorted. For instance, he refers repeatedly to the blind violence of "the mob," as if it were a social organism or personality with a life of its own. What forces bring such a phenomenon into being, and then use it for their own ends, he never indicates, except in isolated references.

How much understanding is possible of the era of Jacksonian democracy (characterized by the author at different times as the Golden Age, and the mob era!) when it is discussed on such a superficial level that there is not a reference throughout to Jackson's struggle against the Bank? Naturally, with such an omission, it is possible to regard popular activity during this period as "mob rule," just as the disregard of the class nature of the struggle during the American Revolution and immediately thereafter permits the author to dismiss as the result of the "heady wine" of liberty, the actual treachery which obstructed Washington and the people's forces during the war itself, and to view the upsurge of a debt-ridden people against Federalism as "rioting."

That entire crucial and formative period of American history, the duration of the Revolutionary War through the framing of the Constitution and the addition of the Bill of Rights, is accorded some thirty-odd pages in a book of 435 pages. Far more space is given to the enumeration of a mass of facts (valuable in themselves but inchoate and overwhelming as presented) regarding sumptuary laws, anti-vice campaigns, quacks and cranks, and morals.

The rising repression of the slavocracy, in the decade preceding the Civil War, is explained in these terms: "The old aristocratic liberalism (sic!), its most able exponents dead and dying, had spent its force. The common man was rising to create a tyranny of the majority." That "the old aristocratic liberalism" was a phase of an emerging class passing from a progressive to a reactionary trend, is an interpretation which Hallgren cannot understand because of his conception of history. Similarly, he comments on Brooks' brutal assault on Sumner in the same period: "Thus the mob era (Jacksonianism) approaches its end as it had begun, on a note of brutish intolerance."

The slave states, says Hallgren, "chose to withdraw" from the Union; by what minorities, even within the unrepresentative state legislatures themselves, he is silent. He can see no difference between measures taken by the North to forestall treason to a progressive cause supported by the majority, and repressive measures taken by the South; "There," he says, "the rebels sought similarly to sweep away the liberties of the people using military necessity as an excuse—*loyal to the cause though the Southerners were,* many of them resented these intrusions on their privacy and freedom." [Emphasis mine.]

In the chapter on Reconstruction Mr. Hallgren perpetuates one and all of the familiar libels on that period. After the war, "the Negroes scarcely knew what to do with their freedom." In this era of "carpet-baggers" and "scalawags," "in Mississippi and South Carolina former slaves arrogated to themselves the prerogatives of the ruling class." And after several pages in this vein, the "reassertion of the old South" is dismissed in a paragraph, in which the restrictions against Negroes' voting are listed, and they are admitted to have been left "no practical and useful liberties worth mentioning."

In the concluding chapters, despite an excellent account, in its general outlines, of anti-labor violence and the hysteria, culminating in the Lusk committee and the Palmer raids of the war period and the years immediately following, Mr. Hallgren again indulges in some shocking statements. For one thing, he cites J. B. McNamara's "confession" to the bombing of the Los Angeles *Times* building without any mention of the deal (admitted by Lincoln Steffens) by which "J. B." was mistakenly persuaded to "confess" and which he alone lived up to! Again, "After the war," says Mr. Hallgren, "the American Federation of Labor forgot its usual caution and *boldly tackled the steel industry.*" [My emphasis.] Mr. Hallgren is apparently unaware that the AFL leadership was forced into action in steel by rank and file militancy,

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and the leadership of a man named William Z. Foster.

As to the Supreme Court, "throughout the thirties, the court continued to strengthen the judicial defenses against tyranny. . . . It is a curious fact that Roosevelt and his fellow reformers chose this very moment when the court was ardently defending the Bill of Rights, to launch the most powerful attack on the judicial system in general and the Supreme Court in particular, that the country had witnessed for many years."

Our recollection of the Supreme Court's record during those years, of the endless minority opinions on behalf of labor and progress, is somewhat different. Just as our impression is that the greatest bulwark on behalf of freedom during the past ten years was not Mr. Hallgren's American Civil Liberties Union, but the rising consciousness and militancy of labor on behalf of its own, with such organizations as the Communist Party and the International Labor Defense blazing the way. It is Hallgren's attitude toward these bulwarks of progress and liberty which makes most clear the reactionary content of his own attitude towards the fight for freedom.

ARTHUR FOWLER.

Brief Review

LAW WITHOUT FORCE, *by Gerhart Niemeyer. Princeton University Press. $3.75.*

This is a rather technical study by a graduate of Kiel University, now a lecturer in politics at Princeton. It begins with the assumption that international law was killed at the outbreak of the present war. Its problem is to investigate the causes of the death and to suggest the possibilities of a revival. Dr. Niemeyer reaches the conclusion that an international organization, such as the League of Nations or the Union Now idea, is an illusion because it rests on a basis of ultimate force and serves as "a permanent source of international struggle rather than a medium of order."

The main strength of the book is critical, although Dr. Niemeyer is prevented from reaching any practical "solution" by the nihilism of his viewpoint. He writes in the Hegelian tradition, for which the State (always capitalized) is on a higher level of existence than the people who inhabit it. That the essence of the book is idealistic to the core may be seen from a typical dictum: "Society is not made up of persons as such, but of the connectedness in their behavior."

The result of Dr. Niemeyer's philosophic idealism is the substitution of "the idea" of international organization for "the thing." He insists on a separation between the "organization" of international law and the "motives" of international law. Isn't this entirely gratuitous? Aren't they complementary and necessary to each other? At bottom the quarrel with Dr. Niemeyer's book involves the old antagonism between idealism and materialism.

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SHINING SCREWBALLS

Joy Davidman appraises Hollywood's galloping attack of schizophrenia. Mr. Powell as a superb teapot.... The musical season in retrospect.

THIS reviewer has said nasty things about Hollywood. Yet today she wishes to make partial amends. There is at least one branch of the film art in which Hollywood remains supreme. I refer, of course, to the screwball comedy. When they want to fill a picture with lunatics, boy, do they fill it with lunatics.

The people in *Love Crazy* start out by being nuts in an agreeable way. Myrna Loy and William Powell have been doing the slap-happy husband and wife so long that they must have moments of forgetting they're not married, offscreen. Nevertheless, their approach retains a good deal of its freshness; Mr. Powell is still the ideal person to see suspended by the neck in an elevator shaft, and Miss Loy's confusion is beautiful to watch as she struggles in the embrace of an amorous amateur archer. When Husband, to prevent divorce by Wife, pretends to be crazy, the film gives you an insane asylum you'll never forget.

There is, naturally, not an atom of sense in the whole thing; but there is a great deal of joy in Mr. Powell's successive impersonations of a teapot, Abraham Lincoln, and a one-man nudist colony. No one with the healthy American aversion to top-hats will fail to get a kick out of the scene in which a couple of dozen toppers float serenely about in a swimming pool. The film's crowning glory, though, is Mr. Powell's impersonation. As Aunt Sophronia from Saskatchewan he reveals entirely unsuspected talents as a character actress. May he live to play many more maiden ladies.

Although minor actors, especially a whiskery terrier, are competent, *Love Crazy* belongs almost entirely to its stars, and less to Miss Loy than to Mr. Powell. It would all be pretty dull in print, probably, but, galloping along on the screen with sly direction and expert cutting, it's a successful attack of schizophrenia.

Shining Victory represents a much rarer kind of film, the brave experiment with an unhappy ending. Long the exclusive property of Miss Bette Davis, the tragic death of a lady has proved so astonishingly successful at the box-office that producers are beginning to slaughter heroines with an indiscriminate and bloody hand. One advantage of the sad ending is that it usually demands a little intelligence from the script's writers, and *Shining Victory*, for this and other reasons, is a thoughtful piece of work. Based on an A. J. Cronin play, it preserves a realistic and critical approach to the medical profession which is its chief virtue.

As the story of a soured research scientist who finally comes to realize that his patients are important as human beings, the picture might have been first rate. Unfortunately, it wanders too much for that; there is an unnecessary introduction and there are romantic interludes here and there which sentimentalize the scientist's character. The work with dementia praecox sufferers which is the core of the film is sketched in so desultory a fashion that the audience finds it difficult to understand just what is happening; thus an opportunity for tremendous drama is wasted. The best moments in *Shining Victory* are behind-the-scenes flashes of hospital administration; the commercial-minded head doctor, out for patronage, and his fatuous assistant are acidly portrayed.

The rambling and leisurely pace of the film lead one to suspect that its excellences are less the achievement of its director than of an unusual cast. There are no smirking young Dr. Kildares here; instead there is James Stephenson, an extraordinary actor, as the research worker with the savage tongue. Geraldine Fitzgerald avoids the sentimentality threatened in her role by a direct and quiet performance, and Barbara O'Neil is particularly good as a neurotic nurse. Donald Crisp, an acid guardian angel, rounds out the hospital group admirably. For all the dignity of its acting, however, and for all the poignance of such moments as a convalescent patient's struggle to recapture his treacherous mind, *Shining Victory* is not the great film that could be made about a sanatorium. It is content to be wistful where it should be heroic.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

Season's Resume

Vital anti-war music plays an important role.

THIS being the open season for critical postmortems, it seems appropriate to take a glance at the recently departed 1940-41 concert season. Like many other seasons there were plenty of concerts. Too many—if your taste requires music more significant than a potpourri of old favorites dutifully played in the best tradition. For instance, the Philharmonic Society, under the uninspired baton of John Barbirolli, can claim as its chief accomplishment only a repetition of familiar symphonies. When Toscanini led the Philharmonic, even though he appeared allergic to most modern composers, he approached each work with such freshness and conviction that the most hackneyed piece was charged with new meaning.

Of all the contemporary works played by the Philharmonic, very few rose above the mediocre. On a program devoted to modern American music, the refreshing directness of Morton Gould's "Foster Gallery" was far more appealing than the dull and pretentious intellectualisms of Bernard Wagenaar's "Third Symphony," or the "Three Pieces for Orchestra" by Roy Harris. Throughout the season a fault common to many of our "accepted" serious American composers (excluding people like Gould) cropped up again and again—their exaggerated preoccupation with problems of attaining purity of form and style. Some of these writers are very skillful and can turn a clever phrase. But the final impression is that nothing is very well said. To take an opposite example, Prokofieff's "Peter and the Wolf" is so popular because it has more to offer than formal structure. Here, the primary concern of the composer is subject matter; though the means to project the subject is in no way unimportant, the form

CHINESE WOODCUTS

(Above) *"Hand-grenade throwers hiding behind the trees give the answer to smuggling sponsored by the Japanese Army."*
(Above, right) *"United."*
(Below, right) *"On the same front."*
(Far right) *"The best for our loyal armed defenders."*

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grew logically out of essential ideas expressed in the piece. In music, like any other art, it would be a very superficial approach mechanically to separate form from content; they are interacting and mutually dependent forces. But often, poverty of real ideas can be camouflaged behind technical resourcefulness.

In the field of opera the "Met" went in for high notes and high society, leaving significance and interest in experiments to organizations of more modest means. The graduate students at the Juilliard School gave a good production of Verdi's "Falstaff," sung in English, and the National Orchestral Association under Leon Barzin performed Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi" nicely. The League of Composers produced an interesting but uneven choral operetta dealing with the legendary American hero, Paul Bunyan. The most important event of the opera season proved to be the three experimental performances of Marc Blitzstein's opera "No For An Answer." Here at last was a work unafraid of the people and events in contemporary America, portrayed in a music richly colloquial and powerful.

Of the many subscription series, the New Friends of Music offered the best balanced and varied programs, even indulging in a splurge of modern music. Here the Friends fell down. Starting with much promise in a splendid program of Ives songs, the succeeding concerts dealt mainly with the moderns of the neurotic Viennese-German school and omitted the recent trends of French, Russian, and American composers.

Of the innumerable instrumental recitals, some were better, some worse. The same can be said of the nightly debuts and irrepressible prodigies. Of the season's concerts, a few are remembered either for their outstanding performances or for the vitality and importance of what they performed. Carnegie Hall opened with a fine concert by Paul Robeson. The American Youth Theater contributed much by sponsoring Elie Siegmeister and the American Ballad Singers in two programs of representative folk song anthology. Ray Lev and Edna Bockstein gave excellent piano recitals. Mordecai Bauman did an outstanding bit as the narrator in "Paul Bunyan." The Saidenberg Little Symphony displayed some of the best music and playing of the year. The chamber music event of the season was the superb playing of the new Shostakovich "Piano Quintet," by Vivian Rifkin and the Stuyvesant String Quartet.

The 1940-41 season was not unscathed by the war. An alarming crop of pro-war songs filled the ether, records, and song sheets. At a swanky Waldorf banquet, Irving Berlin stated that he was frankly puzzled as to why his song "God Bless America" (which he had never regarded very highly and which had been gathering dust for some twenty-four years), should win the medal for the outstanding musical contribution of the year. And the WPA music project only a few short years ago a mighty cultural force, was reduced to a bare shadow by war-hepped legislation.

But this year also saw the emergence of another kind of music. The anti-war songs of the Almanac Singers, some of the numbers from "Meet the People," Robinson's "Spring Song," and the folk music of the American Ballad Singers reflected the deepest sentiments and aspirations of the country. Often overly simple and unpolished, the music is nevertheless sincere, affirmative, and forward looking. The coming season will find this vital material a source of nourishment and strength.

LOU COOPER.

"Any Day Now"

Erwin Piscator's Studio Theater in an unrealistic play.

"ANY Day Now" is the third production of the Studio Theater, a professional group located at the New School, with Erwin Piscator at its head. *King Lear,* the play's predecessor, is recalled chiefly, as a nostalgic remembrance of Piscator's Constructivist days. He was once a progressive influence in the workers' theater of pre-Hitler Germany, but of that former vitality, not a trace can be detected in the current effort. I would be reluctant to count him among the artistically moribund, but after viewing *Any Day Now,*

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the burden of proof against such a judgment is definitely his.

As for the play itself, it begins as watered-down Odets. It concerns itself with a family of Polish-American workers living in Chicago who find the country less than the Eldorado they had expected. The father is a barber who started in life with seven chairs and is now reduced to one. The mother operates a neighborhood beauty parlor. One son is a struggling law clerk, another is chauffeur to a corrupt judge, and a third is a petty racketeer. With them are a German refugee and his two children. The elder of these is a girl in love with the law clerk. All they need is $150 to get married and buy out a law practice in the offing. The refugee is a fine chemist who leads a futile existence experimenting with hair-wave gadgets.

Here is the framework for an honest appraisal of society, for an intelligent evaluation of the forces that are responsible for the family's plight. But the author, Philip Yordan, is moved by different impulses. At this point the resemblance to Odets disappears. The lawyer gets his nest egg, his wife, and his practice, and life thereafter must be one continuous glow, since he encounters no further trouble and might just as well leave the cast for all the bearing he exerts on the rest of the play. The ambitions of the racketeering son emerge as the central core of the action, and all the subsequent difficulties of the family come about through his knaveries. Life is not out of joint says the author. Only the son (Rudolf) is. Not unemployment, not grinding poverty, is the preoccupation of the family. Only the unwillingness of Rudolf to do honest work. In the end after cooking up a special brew of mischief, he promises to settle down, and the final curtain is lowered on a scene of great rejoicing. The happy family will now prosper.

Through the three acts and five scenes of this supposed working class play, this weird interpretation of society goes on, with scarcely any recognition of the world outside. The only realism that obtrudes itself is due to a radio on stage that from time to time blasts out the war bulletins. Early in the play the mother utters some anti-war sentiments and there are one or two vague references to President Roosevelt. All this, however, remains completely outside the action of the play.

The actors constitute a smooth and hard working group, and surely deserve better. John Randolph who plays the lead, was a last minute substitute, due to the sudden illness of the original selection. He manages to keep the play moving but he is terrifically handicapped by his role. The play has about as much dramatic progression as a Shubert musical, and as such can impose only a static role on its chief character. Pert Kelton, a Hollywood veteran, Dara Birse, Robert Harris, Richard Odlin, and others give Randolph good support.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

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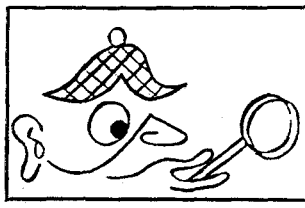

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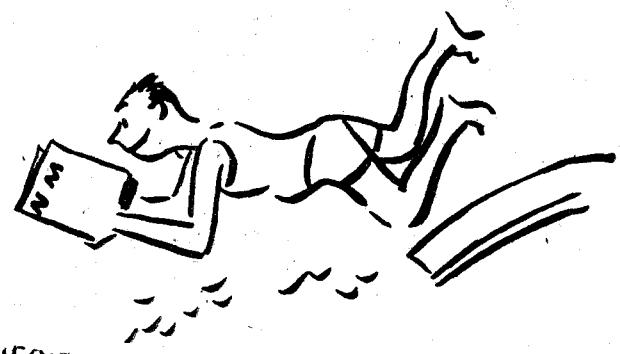

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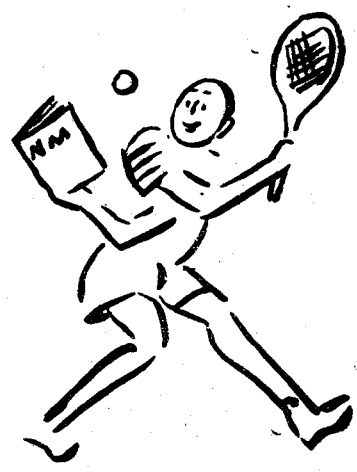

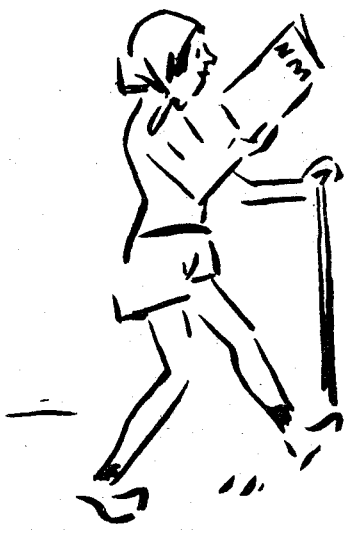

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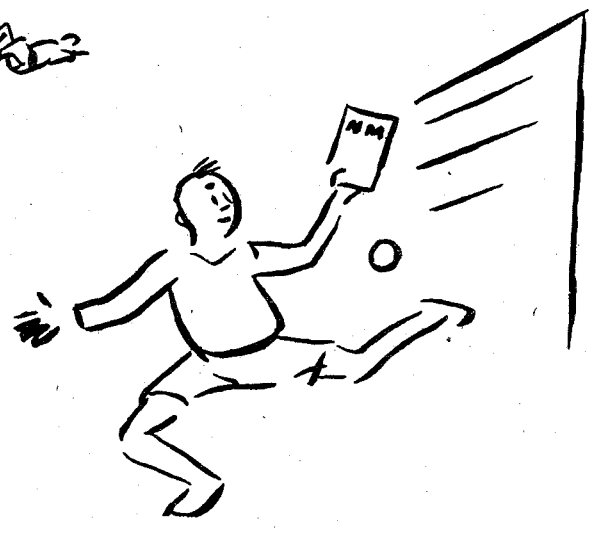

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